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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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Japanese Atrocities

The action of the Japanese in executing American fliers taken as prisoners of war has horrified civilized people everywhere. The Japanese say that their action was taken because the fliers, during the raid on Tokyo a year ago, attacked non-military objects; to this, fliers who participated in the raid and reached Chinese territory safely reply that they were scrupulously careful to follow instructions and to bomb only legitimate targets. These fliers say that if Japanese civilians were machine-gunned in the streets, it was done by their own fighter planes trying ineffectively to attack the American bombers, which were flying just above the housetops. But the point seems fairly immaterial; the Japanese have repeatedly been guilty of acts which in Western eyes seem the grossest sort of barbarities. From Burma come reports that they have habitually and on a large scale forced uniformed prisoners to do heavy labor and bayoneted to death those not physically able to perform such work.

This does not mean that the Japanese are innately of any other human stock than the rest of us. It means that in the past few years, like the Germans, they have been indoctrinated with a degree of savagery that is subhuman by our standards. Like the Germans, they deliberately commit atrocities—as the OWI pointed out the other day—hoping to confuse and dishearten their enemies by so doing.

In this case it looks as though they had failed in their purpose. We are entitled to be proud of the way in which our people have taken the news. So far as we can learn, no one in authority has suggested reprisals. There is no evidence that we shall divert precious equipment from North Africa and send it against the Japanese. The killing of the captive American airmen has only deepened the national resolution to bring the war to a victorious conclusion on all fronts at the earliest possible moment.

Wages or Politics?

The threat of a coal strike does not arise simply from the desire of miners for better wages, the fear of the operators that they will lose profits and the determination of the government to avoid inflation. John L. Lewis is attempting to use all these forces in his series of political struggles to restore his prestige and enhance his power in the labor movement. He lost much of what he had enjoyed when he endorsed Willkie in the campaign of 1940, at a time when the rank and file of labor wanted to vote for Roosevelt. Later, his desire to dominate led to a breach between him and the CIO. Now, if he can bring about a conflict between the administration and the miners in which not only they but a large part of the rest of labor will be forced to support him, he thinks he can have his revenge and climb once more to supremacy.

It is essential for the good of labor as well as for the good of the country that he be defeated in this attempt. Whether in the end he will embark upon a strike in open conflict with the government depends, in some measure at least, on whether he believes he can win. And that depends on the amount of backing he can muster with the public and within his own ranks. If the administration is to be in the best possible position for this challenge, it must make sure that full

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justice, within the limits of the emergency, is offered to the miners, and that its agencies of adjustment and control command the respect of labor in general. Labor does not want to back Lewis, and will not do so unless he is enabled to manipulate the issues so that it is compelled to follow him by the sympathies of the rank and file. A strong and effective stand against the rising cost of living and a wise administration of all labor measures are necesssary for this purpose, if for no other.

The Manpower Conflict

Among the places where the administration needs to strengthen its position on the labor front is in the handling of manpower. The recent wage-freezing order of the WMC may have been necessary in general, but the manner of its adoption has caused widespread revolt both in the CIO and the AFL. Legally, the case made against it is that nothing in the law authorizes such dictatorial exercise of power. No doubt the general war powers of the President might be held to cover acts of this nature, but the real issue is that democratic administration requires the general consent and coöperation of those affected.

From the beginning, labor has complained that it has not been granted an equal voice in the war administration. Regulations have been adopted by bureaucratic edict, rather than as a result of agreement between labor and employers. In Britain, where even more severe manpower restrictions are in force, labor was consulted in advance, and the man who has to administer the rules is a popular trade-union leader. Failure to take the representatives of the unions into full confidence is not merely an error in political strategy; it also leads to costly mistakes in the measures themselves. The men on the job often know better than either their employers or the government how things actually work out in the shop. Criticisms of detail are among the most important leveled at the manpower order. Every consideration prompts a revision of the manpower set-up on more democratic lines.

Lynchers Acquitted

The acquittal of a deputy sheriff and two other white men in the lynching case at Hattiesburg, Mississippi, will be celebrated as a victory by many anti-Negro Southerners and by others who are states'-rights traditionalists. Actually, even though a Southern jury did the expected in voting by skin-color instead of by evidence, this case is an important milestone in the fight against race oppression, and the civil-rights section of the Department of Justice won a victory in the very fact of indicting the men and making a good case of it.

Howard Wash, a Negro, killed his white employer with a water bucket, probably defending himself against a brutal beating. The self-defense evidence was so strong that a white jury voted life-imprisonment instead of the usual capital punishment. While he was awaiting sentencing in a "mobproof" jail, a band of white savages took him from his unlocked cell and hung him from a bridge. The Department of Justice charged a group of defendants with conspiring to deprive Wash of his constitutional rights; in doing so it revived a technique which, obvious though it seems, had been invoked only twice before in lynching cases, the last time in 1904. In that instance the case was thrown out of court on a demurrer.

The Department of Justice lost its case in Hattiesburg, but it has unsheathed a long neglected legal implement which will grow sharper with use. Justice, law and evidence were on the government's side; the weight of a caste system three centuries old was against it, and today in Mississippi this weight is invincible. But it will not always be so. Little by little the forces of enlightened social feelings and of true Christian ethics—for religion is deeply rooted in the Southern soil—gain upon blind race hate and hypocrisy. The very fact that a leading Mississippi attorney aided the government's presentation is a measure of this. It is to be hoped that the civil-rights section of the Department of Justice will continue to indict under "Section 52." Some day the body of a strangled Negro hanging from a bridge is going to move the consciences of even Mississippi jurymen to the conviction that somebody has denied somebody his constitutional rights, and rights older than constitutions and governments.

Mr. Cox and the FCC

By now New Republic readers and a good part of the rest of the population know that Rep. Eugene Cox of Georgia is mixed up in a fight with the Federal Communications Commission over some stock in an Albany, Georgia, radio station he came by in a roundabout way. They know, too, that Representative Cox's interest in the affairs of the Federal Communications Commission was so heightened as a result of its investigation into the Albany deal that he authored a resolution to investigate the FCC. There are some suspicious souls who make a good deal of the juxtaposition of these two items.

Representative Cox's committee has been at work for some time now. Quietly, as befits serious scholars, they have been carrying on their research. For the highly technical job of evaluating the performance of a quasi-judicial agency engaged in the regulation of our communications systems, a special staff was naturally required. To head the investigative group, the committee, upon the recommendation of Chairman Cox, selected a Wall Street lawyer, Eugene Garey, an Irish Catholic political crony of Al Smith and law partner of the chairman of the famed Liberty League's com-

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mittee of lawyers. As assistants in this delicate task, Garey has engaged another of the partners in his Wall Street firm; a Detroit lawyer who was once associated with Garey in the defense of Michigan's Republican boss against federal fraud charges; and a former Dies Committee senior investigator.

Larson at the Bat

For chief investigator, a position clearly demanding knowledge of the field under investigation and the soundest of past experience, the Cox Committee last week chose William Larson, an FBI agent for about ten years, who left his position as head of the Detroit FBI regional office in 1935 to become head of the plant-protection police at General Motor's Fisher Body plant. The La Follette Committee looked into Larson's record about that time and wrote up what they found in a volume called "Labor Spy Systems." According to their findings, William Larson, Cox's new chief investigator, was hired by General Motors to snoop around, in place of the Pinkerton "Ops" who had to be dismissed about then, and find out what GM workers and foremen were saying and thinking about unions and such like.

As is proper in investigations, there has been a lot of moving of papers and files from the FCC to Capitol Hill, but the Cox Committee has not seen fit to follow prescribed form in subpoenaing the desired files; they just come down and truck them away.

Too Much for Mr. Durr

Up until last week, not a single peep had been heard out of any of the FCC Commissioners in protest of Cox's hijacking tactics. Then Garey sent the brashest sort of letter to each Commissioner asking for the names and addresses of "all banks, trust companies, or other depositories employed by you since January 1, 1937." This was a little too much for one member, Clifford Durr of Alabama, who pulled down this sizzling high pitch and laced it back where it came from, with a brief reply. He pointed out to Garey that the kind of information he was seeking "is of an entirely personal nature, unless it is for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not I have been guilty of accepting bribes or of similar misconduct in the performance of my official duties. If you have any information," he went on, "which would lead you to feel that further inquiry along this line is warranted, it is suggested that you refer the matter to the Department of Justice." Durr's action stands out as almost a single bright light of personal courage and self-confidence in a present-day Washington overflowing with people in terror of the Dies Committee, the Kerr Committee and any other inquisitive or inquisitional group.

Real responsibility for the delay and confusion Cox is injecting into FCC operations still lies with Attorney General Francis Biddle, who has been sitting on what his own lawyers consider to be an airtight criminal case against Representative Cox in regard to the Albany radio-station deal. Those in the Department of Justice whose judgment should be best on such matters have informed the Attorney General to this effect, and have recommended that he seek an indictment against Gene Cox without further delay. Biddle is still waiting—for what?

Grade Labeling Again

Last week, gravely alarmed by the sudden timidity of Price Administrator Prentiss Brown on the grade-labeling issue, some fifteen national organizations (including the American Association of University Women, the CIO, the YWCA, the National Farmers' Union, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Coöperative League) challenged his position in a joint letter.

Despite the fact that for more than a year the OPA has exercised its grade-labeling power in some fields (stockings and tires, for instance), Brown now doubts that he has the "legal authority" to require grade labeling of canned goods. In February he announced that grade labels would be required on the 1943 pack of fruits and vegetables. Now, with the growing season well advanced, he thinks it best first to give Congress a chance to act. It is clear, as the letter points out, that "without quality labels buyers might be lulled into a false security by a fixed price for a constantly depreciating product—which is a dangerous way for inflation to sneak in by the back door."

> We fail to see [they wrote] how you can have it both ways. Either you have the power to act or you do not have. If you do have the power, you should use it now and without delay, for delay will only make it more difficult to label the early output of the 1943 pack. If you declare that you do not have the power, then you are declaring that you are without authority to control prices.
>
> Grade labeling is a practice essential to the enforcement of price control; as such, it is clearly an administrative device. . . . Were each administrative agency to throw upon Congress the burden of deciding every administrative issue that special interests made controversial, the prosecution of the war would be rendered impossible.

Protection for Civilians

Donald Nelson has now clinched his opposition to the Maloney bill, establishing an independent civilian-supply agency, with a presidential executive order naming Petroleum Coördinator Harold Ickes, Manpower Commissioner Paul McNutt and Transportation Director Joe Eastman to the War Production Board. Although Nelson recently indicated an increased interest in the civilian part of his job and named a new business man chief of that office, who, he thought could strengthen the organization, supporters of the Maloney bill insisted that a real civilian-supply program could not be administered from within the WPB because many of the agencies most intimately concerned in

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its determinations (Manpower, Transportation, Fuel Oil) were not represented there. Now they are. Maloney is supposed to have told Nelson recently that he was not impressed by intra-WPB fiddling around on civilian supply, but that if an executive order of the kind now in force were issued, he would withdraw his bill. If he does, Nelson is again high man on the totem pole of civilian supply.

Realism in North Africa

IT IS OBVIOUS THAT the forces represented by Giraud and those of de Gaulle are coming closer together. It is also obvious that unity among all Frenchmen is of tremendous importance, since the one most urgent task in the world is still to beat the Axis on the field of battle. No one should raise further questions regarding the disagreements among the French, and their relation to the governments of other countries, without full realization of the seriousness of such a step. Recognizing this, we nevertheless feel obliged to say that there are still in this matter unresolved issues of the greatest importance.

We have no interest in either de Gaulle or Giraud as an individual. Both are far too much to the right for our taste, or that of most Americans. De Gaulle has shown in our judgment greater statesmanship, more ability to learn from experience, than Giraud; no doubt this is partly because he has been subjected to democratic influence, and has been in a democratic milieu, for a much longer period of time. But these individual differences are of no consequence compared with the fundamental conflict between the policies of the two men that is more than ever highlighted by the latest developments in the effort to bring them together.

Both men, or more correctly, both groups, now want a restoration of Republican French law and the elimination of the Vichy decrees. Both say they want the French people, after the end of the war, to choose the sort of regime they desire. But Giraud wants a provisional government in the meantime composed chiefly of the present governors of the French colonies; he would exclude the representatives of the underground, who are the only true spokesmen that metropolitan France possesses at the present time. And we must not forget that metropolitan France is where the overwhelming majority of all the Frenchmen in the world live. Giraud may be partly influenced, in his endeavor to keep out the underground, by the belief that it is ultra-radical; but this is not true. The underground contains representatives of all shades of opinion, from the communists to the conservatives. An important block is the trade unions, who, true to their historic attitude, insist on preserving their independent entity as though they were in fact a political party.

The great difference between Giraud and the underground is that Giraud is willing, and even eager, to forgive and to work with the men of Vichy. The underground and, it is certain, the overwhelming majority of all the Frenchmen in France, regard every Vichyite as a traitor, and they will certainly deal severely with every one of them on whom they can lay their hands. This would until recently have included several of the very governors of the colonies who, under the Giraud plan, would be the members of the new French government, such as Boisson, Peyrouton and Noguès. Any of these men who indicates genuine repentance will be permitted to prove that repentance by entering the armed forces of France, but he will certainly not be accepted—if the loyal French can help it—for a position of authority in any civil government. This is true not only of France but of every other Axis-occupied country.

This situation of immobilized hatred of collaborators with the Axis extends even to North Africa itself. When the Americans entered Sfax, press dispatches reported a curious incident: the mayor of the town insisted on making a long speech to the Americans at once. Reliable French sources in America say that this mayor was undoubtedly trying to save his political future by identifying himself with the Americans as closely as possible. He hoped to create, in the minds of the loyal French in Sfax, enough doubt of his position so that he would not be punished by them, at the earliest opportunity, as a Quisling.

The incident may serve to remind us of the continuing American responsibility of the United States in connection with the French situation. The author of Topics of the Times in The New York Times a few days ago asserted in effect that since the Tunisian military campaign is going well, our policy of continuing to play with the men of Vichy is shown to have been entirely justified. This is a curious statement in view of the fact that those who have criticized the policy have never suggested, so far as we know, that it would have any serious effect upon the military efforts in Africa. They have been concerned about its consequences when and if we invade Italy and France, and when the peace is made. Moreover, the Times Topicer appears to take an oddly pragmatic view of the question. He seems to say that if things were going badly in a military sense, this would prove our policy had been wrong, though in fact reverses on the field of battle might be due to any one of a number of factors.

We do not propose to indulge in any futile handwringing over the American policy. We believe, as we said last week, that the men responsible for that policy are for the most part honest and patriotic even though in our opinion they are wrong. We recognize, moreover, that even with this wrong policy, the United States and its allies can win the war. And yet, there are grave dangers in it. Many Americans believe that our policy indicates we do not really intend, as we say we do, to assist the French in making a free choice of

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their form of government after the war, but intend on the contrary to stack the cards in favor of a government so conservative in character that it probably will not satisfy the wishes of a majority of the population and will lead to a long period of internal dissension if not actual bloody conflict. American critics say further that they fear our policy seems to look toward keeping France as a second-rate power, with little influence in Europe, a power which need not be consulted seriously in the making of the peace and the framing of the post-war world. They believe such an attitude, if it exists, is undesirable not only because it violates the Atlantic Charter and all our other expressed war aims, but because it will be a permanent source of international friction and make permanent peace more difficult.

There are persons, well informed with regard to France in general, who charge that the United States is handicapped in its North African policy by agreements, still in force, which were made many months before we landed in that area, between Robert Murphy of our State Department and representatives of a group of Frenchmen. The bargain, these men say, tied the United States to a policy of working with Vichyites in North Africa who represent ultra-conservatism, Roman Catholicism and big-business interests, notably three important French banks, the Banque de Worms, the Banque de Paris et de Pays Bas, and the Banque d' Indo-Chine. This group of Frenchmen also included, no doubt without Murphy's knowledge, spokesmen for monarchists and for French fascist gangs such as the Croix de Feu and the Cagoulards, whose terroristic practices have included wholesale torture and murder. The group, according to this story, is also connected with General Weygand. It was presumably responsible for the disgraceful scandal under which a ring of insiders made fortunes out of advance information that the United States was about to revalue the franc in North Africa at double its worth. These charges, we repeat, do not reflect upon Mr. Murphy personally. They perhaps do reflect upon his superiors in the State Department who chose an ultra-conservative, devoted Roman Catholic as their agent to deal with a subjugated country—France—which is on the whole liberal and anti-clerical.

According to this story, Darlan was not a member of the group that had made the secret deal with the United States and they did not know that he would turn up in North Africa. The American deal with him was an impromptu matter, born of immediate necessity, and he was killed by a young man who shared the views of the conspirators, whether or not he was actually under orders from them.

We do not know what truth there is in this story, any more than we know what lies behind the charges made by Edgar Ansel Mowrer, one of America's most reliable and responsible journalists. Mowrer says that the United States and Great Britain are thinking seriously of taking away from France important points in her colonial empire. These would include Dakar, to be ruled by this country; Bizerte, to be held by the British; and French Indo-China, to be governed by an international committee on which China would play a prominent part. We repeat: we do not know whether these stories are true; but we are not aware of any inherent reason for believing them improbable. We feel they should be subjected to immediate congressional investigation, despite the fact that the Axis radio will use this fact as a basis for propaganda. No doubt this has already been done, since all the foregoing statements have already been widely circulated. It is not the part of wisdom to let wrong policies go unpublicized for fear that the effort to clean house will make undesirable publicity among one's enemies.

Those who defend the Sate Department—and President Roosevelt, who is finally responsible for its policy—say that the reason the war is not being conducted in a more liberal spirit is because the President's hands are tied by his allies. He cannot, for instance, announce peace terms that are unacceptable to Stalin, Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek. In regard to many matters this is obviously true. For the United States Government, for example, to come out for a greater degree of freedom for India at an earlier date than Great Britain is willing to grant, might lead to dangerous confusion and uncertainty among the Allies at a moment when coöperation is of great importance. But an examination of the facts will show that this is not the case in regard to North Africa. The British support of de Gaulle does them credit, and the whole country is proud of it. Nobody in America defends our support of Giraud except in a hangdog way, and on the dubious grounds of immediate expediency. There is a pointed implicit rebuke for us in the fact that the British have handled their captured African territory enormously better than we have done, and by so doing have shown there was no truth to our excuses about having our hands tied by the hositility of the Arabs for the Jews, etc. Britain has to live closely with France, as we don't; she is less inclined than we are to dictate to the French a type of government that they don't want. As for Stalin, he is clearly on the other side from us. The French Communists are coöperating with the underground and with de Gaulle. In so far as the Chinese have an opinion in this matter, they would certainly be on the side of the plain people of France.

Our policy therefore is harmful at this moment to our relations with every one of our most important allies. It is harmful to our relations with the inhabitants not only of France but of every Axis-subjugated country. It is certainly doing the President and the State Department no good here at home, in any political sense. On a basis of the facts, we submit that it is high time this policy was reconsidered.

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Rubber

THE TRUMAN COMMITTEE is now well under way with a new investigation into the rubber rumpus. Ever since Rubber Tsar Jeffers was appointed to put into effect the Baruch report recommendations on rubber, there have been both open and undercover fighting between him and the other claimants for the critical components needed to produce synthetic rubber. The same things are essential to produce high-octane gasoline for airplanes and escort vessels. The army and navy, the Maritime Commission and the Office of the Petroleum Coördinator have all at various times denounced Jeffers for hogging what they claimed was an undue share of the available pumps, compressors, valves, condensers and other parts each of them needs so desperately.

Last week in Washington, this smoldering fight broke out into the open again. Undersecretary of War Robert Patterson opened fire with a salvo of newspaper charges saying that unless the priority standing held by Jeffers for the rubber program is withdrawn and a higher priority rating is assigned to high-octane plants producing aviation gasoline, the planned air assault on Europe this summer will be gravely weakened. Jeffers interpreted the Patterson blast as the equivalent of a charge of sabotaging the war and roared back through the press demanding an immediate investigation of the charges. Petroleum Coördinator Ickes chimed in rather gently on Patterson's side, and the navy hastened to put in its two cents' worth about how Jeffers was also holding up the production of escort vessels urgently needed to combat the serious menace of Axis submarines. The fight was on again.

Since last fall Donald Nelson and the WPB Requirements Committee have been acting in accordance with the letter of the President's directives on priority rights in this case. Nelson's record is free of any charges of favoritism in the matter. The army's position on the 100-octane-gas question, however, is not entirely clear. As late as last summer, army requirements for aviation gas were going over to the WPB with a request for nothing more than AA-3 or AA-4 in the way of priority. Both Ickes and Nelson have been more vigorous in pushing the high-octane-gas program ahead than have Patterson and the army. There are some who think that Patterson's sudden bid for publicity on this question is designed to cover up his previous delinquencies. Their case is strengthened by the fact that he chose to try his case in the newspapers, before making any complaints at all directly to Donald Nelson about the operation of the present allocation system.

Regardless of the truth about who is doing the knifing and who is being knifed in the present tussle, it is reasonably clear that it is time for a thorough reconsideration of the synthetic-rubber program in light of the new military situation and the apparently increased high-octane-gasoline requirements. Almost two months ago Donald Nelson saw this coming and asked Bernard Baruch to reconstitute his committee for the purpose. Baruch is reluctant to do so, and Nelson, understandably, is reluctant to pick up a potato this "elder statesman" considers too hot to handle. It may be up to Economic Stabilizer Byrnes to take the initiative in calling together the disputants for a showdown on future priority policy. In the meantime, the Truman Committee has received an official nudge to go ahead with an investigation of the controversy, with an eye to preparing public opinion for whatever new program is worked out. It is possible that the Gillette Committee and other existing committees of the House and Senate will take this as a signal to start private inquiries of their own into the matter. In that case we may very rapidly come around the circle again to the same sort of confusion which made necessary the Baruch report in the first place.

It is imperative that no such calamity be allowed to occur now, when every moment is so important in the preparation of our coming offensive. Let's have an honest reëxamination of the synthetic-rubber question, a frank airing of the whole ugly mess, followed by a clear decision as to who gets what priority rating on the critical components that are the cause of all the shooting. Let's have the facts, and also the heads of all persons who are standing in the way of getting ahead as rapidly as possible with these three essential production jobs. As Senator Truman has said, "There is no doubt that both rubber and aviation gasoline are vitally essential to the war program, but they can only be produced with materials now available. Both programs are bound to suffer from continuing disputes."

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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Washington's Plan for Germany

EVEN THE CLEVER DR. GOEBBELS must be having a difficult time these days. It is certainly no easy task to explain why the loss of an army before Stalingrad, the desert fox's headlong retreat, the massive bombing of ill defended German cities are but stepping-stones on the road to victory. It is not unlikely that the German people have started wondering whether there is no other way out of misery and mourning than that prescribed by the medicine man of Berchtesgaden.

In his precarious situation, the Nazi propaganda lord has been helped out by Mr. Kingsbury Smith and The American Mercury. It will not be long before the Angriff of Berlin will publish a facsimile of The Mercury's jacket advertising as an "authoritative inside article," "Our Government's Program for a Defeated Germany." Now the Nazis need no longer make reference to some obscure writer's private blueprint of how to treat the German people. Here it is "authoritatively" stated what awaits them if, by any chance, they despair of an Axis victory: the political and economic dismemberment of Germany, the rule of American *Gauleiters* for an indefinite period of years, paternal benevolence in case the Germans behave well during a probationary period which will last not less than one generation.

Such a perspective may once more drive the German people into a bloc of desperate unity behind their Führer. If their children have to live under conditions of material and moral pariahdom, the German soldiers may fight to the last ditch. And our government had better set aside the millions that are now being spent for political propaganda to the Axis peoples for defraying the considerable costs involved in the long-lasting occupation of Germany.

It is not to be expected that at the end of the war American public opinion will be full of kind-hearted benignity toward the Germans. Too many horrors have been perpetrated by the soldiers of the Wehrmacht and by the Gestapo to make popular a distinction between good and bad Germans. Possibly a scorched-earth strategy applied by the retreating scourgers of Europe will have extinguished the vaguest remembrance of the fact that the Nazis had first to unleash their terror against many thousands of German anti-fascists before they could turn against the outside. On Armistice Day John Doe will not weigh the solutions offered for the post-war treatment of Germany on the balance of humanitarian principles but solely on that of his own benefit.

Unflaggingly, Mr. Smith presents the confidence he obtained from our "official planners" as dictated by the sheer self-interest of the United States. But if we are interested in a lasting peace and a stable European order, then the plan outlined by him will prove not only unworkable but dangerous to our very objectives.

By the destruction of their political unity shall the German people pay for following Hitler in his drive for world conquest. Wiser men than Mr. Smith's American planners wonder how it will be possible to unscramble the tyrannical unity Hitler brought over Europe. Bold enough, The Mercury's "scoop" endeavors the unscrambling of a unity almost seventy-five years old.

It might rightly be considered as the most unfortunate occurrence in modern European history that the belated unification of Germany had not been carried out by a Carl Schurz and his liberal friends but by an Otto von Bismarck and his Prussian paladin. But to hope that now a territorial separation of the rest of Germany from "Prussian influence" will prove a remedy against German aggressiveness is both a fallacy and an anachronism. Why does one forget that during the period of the Weimar Republic, Bavaria was the hotbed of reaction and Nazism? That Hitler was born in Austria and Hess in Egypt? That the majority of the most dreaded fifth columnists in South America are devoted Catholics and speak the dialect of peaceful Swabia? The "disease" of Germany, if disease there is, must have a more complicated etiology than a germ developing solely in the melancholic plains between Kurland and the Elbe.

But the political and economic dismemberment of Germany, we are reminded, is all for the best for the German people. Their literary and musical culture was never so highly developed as when that country was not yet united. How strange these Germans are! Split their fatherland into pygmy states in the epoch of aviation and they will write another "Faust." Starve them and they will raise their voices in a hymn, "An die Freude." Is it not evident that if a unity for which they strove a century ago is taken from them, all their energies will turn to making artificial divisions coalesce again? Mr. Smith's planners are right when they advocate prohibiting in Germany the existence of parties whose policies are based on extreme nationalism, and every democrat will agree that another German republic shall not again give aid and comfort to its gravediggers. Strict control will be exercised, so it is further stated, to make sure that such political movements do not develop underground. But in case these movements hide their actual aims behind a plea for reunification of the Palatinate with Hesse, we are afraid that nobody but the American *Gauleiter* and his policing forces will be there to oppose the popular aspirations. The Gestapo is experiencing what it means to rule a

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country seething with mass opposition. Unless we perfect considerably the brutal contrivances of the Gestapo, attempts at enforcing that new American order might turn out to be an outright failure and sow the seeds of future wars.

Our "official planners" are not only bad historians and psychologists. They are also bad economists. A reduction in size of the overgrown and artificially inflated heavy industry of Germany is readily conceivable and, if properly devised, will not necessarily throw out of gear European economy. But what does the "dismemberment of Germany as an economic unit" mean? Reintroduction of internal tariff barriers within the pre-1938 borders of Germany at a moment when the necessities of relief and reconstruction after a devastating war will make economic unity indispensable even on the European level? Our planners realize, we are told, that Germany is to be the workshop of Europe. There is no intention to scrap the workshop. Nevertheless, Germany, at least for the prolonged period in which her good behavior has to be tested, will get no more food supplies than the minimum required to prevent actual starvation. The amount of foreign trade in which she will be allowed to participate will be strictly limited to a few indispensable raw materials.

If these are the conditions under which the workshop of Europe will have to exist, it is unavoidable that the whole of Europe will starve or will have to be taken care of continuously by America. (That the latter alternative is phantasmagoric has long since been realized.) While "our government's plan" does not discuss this penalization of the entire European continent, a British writer, Mr. Einzig, who thinks in similar post-war terms, has driven his dark perspective to its logical conclusion. As long as European countries possess stocks of raw materials, the butcher bird in their midst will be tempted to appropriate them. Thus it is advocated that the neighbors of Germany keep their stocks overseas and handle only the smallest possible amount within their borders. To prevent aggression, a poverty-stricken system is devised for an area which once was the world's most developed industrial center. But out of poverty rises fear and out of fear new aggression.

The American planners, however, are not resigned to the idea that the German people cannot be made a peaceful and contented member of a sensible society of nations. To indoctrinate them with the basic principles of peaceful processes, a great educational campaign of enlightenment is advocated. It is to be feared that this adventure in pedagogy will be altogether fruitless when it is carried out as part of that grand strategy we are prepared to apply to post-war Germany. The Educational Expeditionary Force will hardly meet with more success than the policing forces of the occupation army.

Of course, the German people will have to be "re-educated" out of any desire to start a new war. But can this be done by arguments and words? Republican Prussia had made compulsory for use in high schools one of the finest and most progressive history textbooks ever written. This did not prevent the middle-class youth from turning Nazi when the economic crisis threatened professional workers and university graduates with perpetual unemployment. Teaching and propaganda leave a lasting imprint only when they are backed by experience. The horrors of a war which this time has been brought home to the German people will furnish part of the necessary experience. A rational and stable order in Germany and Europe is the only reality which will definitely kill the lust to seek in martial adventures honor and glory. Because "our government's plan," as presented by Mr. Smith, does not provide for such a rational and stable order, all its proposals concerning the reëducation of the Germans will prove futile.

Certainly, there must be guarantees against an early return to power of aggressive German chauvinism. There is, however, not one true guarantee in the plan offered to us. The stern punishment of all those who are on the Allied governments' (and the German anti-fascists') "atrocity list" will be necessary as a measure of atonement, but insufficient as a means of reconstructing Germany on new foundations. The military occupation of German lands will be a matter of course, at least for a time. But if the main task is to extirpate the very roots of German aggressiveness, no army of occupation will ever be able to do the job.

Even a thorough disarmament of Germany will not be achieved by controlling Allied commissions alone. When the Weimar Republic passed away, the German militarists cynically boasted how they had succeeded after Versailles in fooling supervision by their resourcefulness and plotting. Demobilized officers formed "coöperative settlements," detective bureaus, traveling circuses and moving firms so as always to have available a reservoir of trained men. Double walls, concealed basements and relocated heating pipes served as hiding places for forbidden arms. When a control commission was in sight, armored cars were promptly replaced with a herd of sheep; large ships were loaded to capacity, anchored, and placed in the custody of an accomplice. Let us even suppose that after this war a stricter supervision will be attempted. Never will it be possible to prevent by mere policing methods the recurrence of a conspiracy whose real roots lie deeper, in a sphere which no occupying army can reach.

The roots of what today are presented as the German national character lie buried in the "compact of iron and rye" which a Bismarck was so anxious to bring about. By that unholy alliance, the bankrupt owners of ill administered and oversized landed estates

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pledged the support of heavy industry in its mad rush for armament; in turn the Junkers received the gift of high tariffs and of subsidies leading to international complications as well as to internal economic disturbances. Army and high bureaucracy furnished the backbone for a ruling caste which, by its economic interests and by its contempt for the common man inside and outside the German border, fomented impetuous chauvinism. It has often been told how these very same forces, left unmolested by the Allies in 1919 and by a republic which did not know how to assert itself, plunged Germany into Nazism and thus the world into another war.

Hence there is no hope for a peaceful Europe unless the landed estates are permanently broken up, the political and economic control wrested from the German trusts, and unless the representatives of the ruling caste in the military and civil bureaucracy are deprived of their power. "But *we* cannot do this," warns Michael Straight in his book on the future of the United Nations. "Only the German people can destroy the roots of German fascism, and our policy in the period of the armistice can only be to aid the German people in this task. *In the last war our intervention in Germany was to prevent social revolution. In this war our purpose must be to incite social revolution in Germany.*"

But here "our government's" opinion, as expounded by Mr. Smith, is totally different. Revolution? "That is the one thing the American planners feel must be avoided in Germany." If this is so, then the American planners must be told that they are trying to square the circle. The social revolution which is needed in Germany aims at nothing else than a thorough democratization of the country. Because the democratic revolution had never been completed, the actual power remained with a feudalized clique which, to maintain itself, sought expansion and war. There is a deliberate attempt on the part of our peace-planners to present every coming revolution in Germany as a communist uprising. Throughout Mr. Smith's article, the Red scare is palpable. If we do not proceed as proposed, it is intimated, we shall see in Germany a Russian-inspired dictatorship. The contrary is true. While a thorough democratic revolution is the sole means of transforming an aggressor nation into a peaceful member of an international society, an attempt to apply unrealistic, conservative and half-hearted methods might before long drive the Germans to embrace a Red dictatorship. Instead of an independent democratic Germany, entertaining friendly relations with her neighbors both in the East and in the West, we might see the Soviet banner over Cologne—and soon thereafter perhaps also over Boulogne.

It is fashionable, and it might become even more so, to denounce as "appeasers" those who warn against inflicting on Germany an order maintained solely by British and American bayonets. Appeasement, if we remember correctly, was the frantic attempt to keep the present rulers of Germany in place, even at the price of their hegemony over Europe. But why is it appeasement to demand that not only Nazism but all the forces which make for German aggressiveness be stamped out? Not a "soft" peace is advocated, but a sound one. When those who now vociferously cry out for a "strong" peace discover that their solution is simply not workable, they may once more relapse into real appeasement of a new chauvinism they themselves brought about.

Because The American Mercury's "American planners" are afraid of every popular movement, be it simply democratic, the German people plays no role in their program except that of mere object. At one place it is stated that we intend to draw a distinction between Germany as a state and as a people. But the only difference in treatment seems to be that, while one proposes to dismember the German state, one generously refrains from dismembering individual Germans. No thought is given anywhere to the question how the Germans will be enabled to lay the foundations for genuinely democratic and effective institutions of their own, winning popular support for the preventing of conspiracies and secret armament. Nothing is said about the way in which the German people will be given a vote in a new and sane society of nations. Our peace-planners think solely in terms of "probationary periods," "limited permissions," "drastic economic sanctions" and "proper supervision."

What becomes of the principles of the Atlantic Charter granting the right of self-government to all nations, promising to victors and vanquished alike access on equal terms to the trade and to the raw materials which are needed for their economic prosperity?

Secretary of State Cordell Hull explicitly endorsed these principles of the charter on July 23, 1942, and Mr. Sumner Welles, in his address of May 30, 1942, emphasized that "if this war is in fact a war for the liberation of peoples, it must assure the sovereign equality of peoples throughout the world."

Who, then, are the official planners in whose minds this blueprint for a defeated Germany is taking shape? Who charged Mr. Kingsbury Smith to publicize it in a way so helpful to Dr. Goebbels? Is it a trial balloon? Or just one of those "wild stories" which Assistant Secretary of State Adolph A. Berle Jr. denounced recently in energetic terms?

The "overwhelming support of public opinion" which this plan seeks to enlist should be denied to it as soon as it is understood where the advocated solutions lead not only Germany but also Europe and the world.

Let us not scrap the hope for a stable world order and a lasting peace. Let us scrap this plan.

HENRY W. EHRMANN

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Bancor or Unitas?

An International Currency—What Sort and Why

ONE OF THE CHANGES which we shall find after the war will be the existence of an international currency. We may safely assume that this innovation will be made, because it has been proposed by both the United States and the British governments. Congress and Parliament must act before it becomes an accomplished fact, but the chances are that they will act favorably. Other nations as well must be asked to accept the scheme, but most of them could hardly fail to do so, just as in the past most of them based their exchanges either on the dollar or on the pound sterling.

The name for the new currency unit suggested in the British white paper—the authorship of which is credited to Lord Keynes—is the bancor. The name suggested in Secretary Morgenthau's proposal is the unitas. This does not mean that after the war a man can walk into a shop on Fifth Avenue or Bond Street and say, "Please show me a two-bancor hat"; or that he will ask for a pair of shoes costing a unitas. Each nation will keep its own currency as before. The international unit will simply be a means of reckoning, in a central fund or clearing union. But it does mean, if the plan is adopted and works, that a dollar will always, day after day, month after month and year after year, be worth substantially the same in terms of the bancor or unitas, and so will the pound, the franc, the peseta, the ruble and all the other monetary units. Therefore they will be worth the same in terms of one another, and there will be no more wild fluctuations in international rates of exchange.

Publication of the two plans caused immediate examination of the differences between them. So natural is the feeling for conflict that everyone seemed to be asking, What is each trying to put over on the other? The differences are interesting, but by far the more important fact is that both governments are aiming at the same target, and with much the same weapons. The plans are tentative and open to revision in conference, and their basic similarities are far more important than their differences. Before comparing them, therefore, we should inquire into the desirability of their objective and the general principles governing its attainment.

Why Stable Exchanges?—If there is any drier or more technical subject in the dismal science than international exchange and finance, it would be difficult to find it. Yet all of us who have traveled have experienced the results of exchange fluctuations, as have all business men concerned with importing and exporting, and all bankers with whom they deal. Whole populations as well, whether they know it or not, have suffered from this cause.

In the United States we are fortunate in having a single currency across the continent, but we seldom understand our blessings in this respect, any more than we think of the benefit of air or pure water. But suppose each state had its own monetary system, no one of which was stable in terms of the others. Difficulties of travel would be immensely increased. Yet people would be rushing from New York to Chicago and back, or from Miami to St. Louis, just to spend their money where the exchange rates were most favorable and to avoid spending it where they could buy less. If anyone on the East Coast had to order grain or manufactured goods in the Central West, he would have to think twice as to whether to do it now or next month, even if he expected the price to remain unchanged at the point of sale, because he would have to speculate on changes in the relative values of the monetary units themselves. Either the buyer or the seller would stand a chance of loss which had nothing to do with his normal costs and business prospects. As a matter of fact there would be a whole gang making its money in exchange speculation, and this gang would be supported by commissions paid by those who would have to use the exchange market to hedge against possible losses. Trade would be more difficult and costly; hence there would be less of it and our standards of living would suffer.

But these would be only the "normal" inconveniences. In times of economic distress and financial crisis, the pressure of fluctuating exchanges would lead to all kinds of abuses. Speculators would rig the money markets for their own advantage. There would be flights of capital from one state to another, since people with money would want to send it where it would be safest or worth most. These movements would themselves aggravate exchange inequalities. They might, furthermore, be deliberately used by state governments which were hostile to and wanted to weaken others. Meanwhile, political pressures would lead to governmental monkeying with exchange rates in the supposed interest of the several states.

One state, wishing to export more and import less, would legally depreciate its currency, thus making it cheaper for "foreigners" to buy in that state and dearer for its citizens to buy abroad. Other states would follow suit in an exchange-depreciation race, thus upsetting all currency stability, with advantage to none and disadvantage to all. Finally all kinds of ingenious devices

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would be adopted by state governments, permitting the use of exchange for this purpose but not for that, in order to force others to buy from them who would not do so on the basis of price and quality alone. Nazi Germany became an adept in this kind of finagling.

If we can picture what this sort of thing could do to trade, production and employment within the borders where the dollar is now the single standard of value, we can gain an idea of what it actually did to the whole world for more than a decade before the war. To abolish exchange fluctuations by stabilizing all currencies in terms of a single international monetary unit is so patent an advantage, and so clear a necessity if we are to avoid economic causes of war, that its desirability must be obvious to all.

Means of Achieving Stability. – In order to understand how to avoid exchange fluctuations. we must understand what makes exchanges fluctuate. The traditional system was merely a free market. Anyone wanting the money of a foreign country, for purposes of making payments or otherwise, simply bought the currency of that country from a dealer in foreign exchange. Those receiving payments in the currencies of foreign countries sold the foreign money in exchange for their own. Thus the net result of all these transactions was to set the exchange rates according to demand for and supply of the several currencies.

There was nothing to limit the fluctuations of these rates except the fact that many of the currencies were based on a metallic standard—usually gold. When the exchange value of a certain currency rose so high that it was cheaper for the foreign purchaser to pay in gold than to buy any more of the currency, gold shipments would be made instead of exchange purchases. These of course would be just as valuable to the recipient, because by the law of his own country he could exchange the gold for his own money at a fixed rate. Thus the fluctuations of exchange were held within narrow limits set by the cost of shipping gold.

There was nothing, however, to prevent gold from becoming scarce in a given country if its balance of payments continued to be adverse for any length of time. And when that occurred, the country was compelled either to devaluate its currency or to go off the gold standard altogether. Nor was there anything to prevent any country from doing either of these two things, or any modification of them, at any time when its governing powers so wished, whether there was a shortage of gold or not. And once the gold standard was gone, market fluctuations knew no limits except those set by supply and demand, unless some deliberate form of exchange control was set up. All this is exactly what happened all over the world during the last depression.

One remedy would be for everyone to go back to the gold standard and abolish all exchange regulation. It would be a nice, easy remedy, except for the fact that the United States has most of the gold and would first have to give it back to the countries from which it came. Then, if pre-war conditions continued, we should before long get all the gold again, and again have to give it all back. Even if our authorities were "generous" enough to do this, others would prefer not to depend on our generosity. The old gold standard is gone for good.

Two things are necessary if a substitute is to be found. First is the political consent of the several countries to fix the values of their currencies in terms of some new international unit, and then not to change those values substantially without general consent. Second is the economic means of supporting the agreed values in the exchange market, so that the necessity to change them may be controlled. The American and British plans offer means of doing both, at least up to a point.

Bancor and Unitas. – According to the British plan, the respective countries would at the start agree to values of their currencies in terms of the bancor, which in turn would be based on gold, though not inflexibly so. They would then agree not to change the values without resorting first to a series of other procedures. According to the American plan, the countries would join an international fund, controlled by themselves, which would fix the values of the currencies in terms of the unitas—worth $10 gold. Exchange values would subsequently be controlled by this international agency. According to both plans, all countries in the agreement would give up all other exchange limitations and controls, except those necessary to prevent flights of capital or for certain other purposes, all under international consent.

The economic support for exchange values provided in the British plan is based on the simple banking principle now operating within all countries. Settlement of balances of payments would not be made in "cash"—that is, in gold—but in drafts on an international clearing center by the debtor, which would become deposits in the clearing center—or bank—to the account of the creditor. The creditor would not be supposed to draw out these deposits except to meet his own exchange requirements. From its resources accumulated in this way, the bank could make loans to those paying countries whose deposits were not sufficient to meet their obligations. Or, as the British say, the depositors would be allowed to make "overdrafts."

The amount of these overdrafts, or, as we say, the "line of credit" extended, would be limited in various complicated ways. Quotas would be assigned to the participating countries, depending on their previous volume of trade. After using a certain percentage of its quota, the debtor nation would become subject to certain procedures if it wished more credit. It would be

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bound to seek advice about its fiscal and trade policies, for instance.

This system would not allow an indefinite support of exchange values through borrowing. But it would postpone the point at which devaluation would be necessary, because it would make available the surpluses of the creditor nations for the use of the debtor nations, instead of allowing these surpluses to be sterilized in gold payments as at present. Thus it would favor the expansion of trade.

The American plan would accomplish the result not so much by clearing and banking procedure as by a stabilization fund, much like those now in effect to stabilize the dollar and the pound. Each nation joining would make a contribution to the fund, depending on the amount of gold it had, its balance of payments and its national income. The management of the fund could then buy and sell currencies, gold and government bonds. It could thus support exchange values directly and also, in effect, make loans for the same purpose. Again, a quota system would be used to limit the support to any given currency, and to induce the country in question to take any desirable measures to correct its own economic situation.

Differences in the Plans. – Disregarding many minor technical details, two important differences appear on first reading of the drafts. First is the question of voting power in the management of the international center. The British suggest distributing votes on the basis of quotas to be set, in the first instance, according to the pre-war volume of imports and exports of each country. That would give the British the largest share in control. Mr. Morgenthau suggests distributing votes on the basis of contributions to the fund, consisting largely of gold. That would give the United States the largest share in control. Though he would limit the participation of any one nation to 25 percent, his plan also provides for the necessity of an 80-percent vote before the more important decisions were taken. Thus, if we contributed up to the limit, we alone might have a veto power which no other nation could exercise without help from another.

This is not a contradiction of principle, and it probably can be settled by bargaining, since both drafts are tentative. It is to be hoped that neither nation would be in a position to dictate to the other or to the rest of the world; the ultimate independence of all is safeguarded in both plans by the fact that all are free to withdraw and no important regulation can be put into effect except by the action of individual governments.

The other difference is more important as far as the texts of the proposals go, but there is plenty of room to hope that it represents no real difference in the intentions of the two governments. Stabilization of the kind visualized by either plan is more like suppressing the symptom than curing the disease. It is highly useful as far as it goes; indeed it is absolutely necessary as a beginning. But it will not go very far if a contraction of world trade sets in and continues after the war, and if certain nations continue to have adverse balances of payments year after year, as they have had in the past. The British plan frankly recognizes this limitation and points out the necessity for more fundamental measures; the American plan sticks to its muttons, and though it does not explicitly exclude other projects, its whole tone is legalistic, pedestrian and unimaginative.

According to the preface of the British white paper, four lines of approach are desirable, of which this is only the first. The second is adapting the framework of trade, consisting of tariffs, import regulations, subsidies and the like. The third is the ordering of production, distribution and price to prevent restriction of output and extravagant fluctuation. The fourth and, I should say, the most important, is "investment aid, both medium and long-term, for countries whose economic development needs assistance from the outside." In short, the Keynes proposal keeps steadily in view the aim of avoiding depression and stimulating expansion in the world economy. Without this, any new scheme for exchange stabilization will in the end meet the same fate as the automatic gold standard.

The British text makes one specific recommendation of the greatest importance. Remedial measures should be recommended, not only to debtor countries which are in danger of overborrowing, but to creditor countries which are piling up exchange balances in excess of their quotas. For unless the creditor nations cooperate, the debtors usually cannot increase their exports. Measures which may be suggested to the creditor nation—to be taken at its own discretion—include expansionist fiscal policy at home which will increase employment and so the demand for imports, reduction of tariffs and trade barriers, possible upward valuation of its currency in terms of the bancor, or the making of international development loans in the debtor countries. We should not forget that the drain of gold to this country during the years of depression was fully as much caused by our own failure to produce a full-employment economy at home, to admit the necessary imports of goods and to find a way of investing surplus money abroad, as by the mistakes or misfortunes of the nations from which the gold came.

It is probable that those who are doing post-war planning for our government have in mind these more fundamental considerations. Certainly the administration has a long record of trying to reduce trade barriers. Probably Mr. Morgenthau thought it was shrewd politically to propose only one step at a time. But the stabilization plan itself would be more acceptable to the other nations concerned, as well more comprehensible to those capable of fundamental economic thinking, if some glimpse were given of a larger program.

Washington GEORGE SOULE

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The Sorrows of Elmer Davis

NOBODY can help sympathizing with Elmer Davis as he stands exposed to crossfire on the Washington battlefield, while dissension spreads in his little army and Congress prepares to cut off the flow of supplies from the rear. Not so long ago, everybody was praising him as the clearest, the most concise and level-headed of all the American radio commentators. It seemed at the time—and it still seems—that nobody was better fitted by training and character to direct the new Office of War Information. Most of his sorrows in that post are not of his own making.

He accepted it only from a sense of duty. He liked his work in radio and, under terms of a new contract, he was drawing a salary of $40,000 a year, four times as much as he would earn in government service. He recognized the dangers of a Washington career. We all know that Mr. Roosevelt had a hard time persuading him to be head of the OWI and that he took the job only under certain conditions, after explaining that he was not an administrator and that he didn't want to be responsible for policy-making.

The final arrangement was said to be that Archibald MacLeish would formulate policies for the Domestic Branch of the OWI, as formerly for the Office of Facts and Figures, and that Milton Eisenhower would settle the administrative problems. Davis' chief functions in the organization would be, first, to get more news out of the War and Navy Departments and, second, to deal with the press. In the first of these tasks he had less success than he and the public hoped for, but probably—considering the military mind—more than anybody else in his place could have achieved. In the second task, he was almost as good as Mr. Roosevelt. The newspapermen liked his Indiana voice and his easy manner, and they learned to trust what he said.

The office arrangement worked fairly well as long as Milton Eisenhower and MacLeish were his chief assistants, but Eisenhower had to be detached for outside duties. MacLeish resigned, and some of the high-powered salesmen in the agency were glad to see him go. Davis then "drafted"—that was the word he used—Gardner Cowles Jr. as head of the whole Domestic Branch, a post that partly combined the functions of Eisenhower and MacLeish. Cowles is an Iowa newspaper publisher prominent in Republican politics as a supporter of Willkie. He named as his chief assistants William Lewis, a former vice-president of the Columbia Broadcasting System, and James Allen, a career official who used to be in charge of press relations for the SEC. Lewis and Allen began bringing in new men, including several advertising executives, and promoting new methods of selling the war. The result was that Davis, who wanted nothing to do with policy or administration, now found himself responsible for the administrative acts of subordinates whom he probably would not have hired, and for policies of which he may never have approved.

And this was only the beginning of his sorrows. The friends in Congress of a soft and easy war were attacking the OWI for proving that sacrifices would be necessary. The conservatives were trying either to capture or else to abolish what they regarded as a New Deal agency. The Dies Committee was on his trail; already Dies's gray eminence, J. B. Matthews, was hinting to his friends among the reporters that the OWI was the principal refuge of what he regards as the radical and subversive elements within the government—in other words, the supporters of President Roosevelt—and that these potential traitors had access to the confidential files of Army Intelligence. It was a hair-raising story, more useful to the Nazi propaganda campaign than even the biggest of Dr. Goebbels' lies. Meanwhile there was no sign of support for Davis from the White House; the President was busy with military and international affairs. The time was approaching when Davis would have to go before Congress to justify a new appropriation, his organization had grown and he was asking $47,342,000 for the next fiscal year. All his congressional enemies would have their words to say.

At this juncture, fifteen of his employees, including the former head of the Graphics Division and almost the entire staff of the Writers' Division, submitted their resignations in a body. I happen to know most of them, and they are not cranks or idealists with their heads in the clouds. On the contrary, they are extremely competent, likable and well balanced people who want to do everything they can to win the war and fully agree with Davis' policies as distinguished from those advocated by some of his subordinates. They would ordinarily have been his firmest supporters, and their resignations, coming when they did, must have seemed to him almost like treachery. Yet if Elmer Davis, instead of directing the OWI, had been working in the Writers' Division, his record seems to show that he would have been among the first to sign their joint statement to the press.

It was a carefully worded statement, and it gives a fair picture of what had happened under the new regime in the OWI. Part of it read:

> We are leaving because of our conviction that it is impossible for us, under those who now control our output, to tell the full truth. No one denies that promotional techniques have a proper and powerful function in telling the story of the war. But as we see it, the activities of OWI on the home front are now dominated by high-pressure

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promoters who prefer slick salesmanship to honest information. These promoters would treat as stupid and reluctant customers the men and women of the United States. They delude themselves that the only effective appeal to the American public in wartime is the selfish one of "What's in it for me?"

. . . The promoters who are now running the domestic information policy of OWI for Elmer Davis do not share his faith in the American people. They are turning this Office of War Information into an Office of War Ballyhoo.

At a press conference on April 15, Davis replied that the writers had made "completely incorrect" statements about the future policy of the OWI. "Emotional appeals of the type usually associated with promotional activities are not applicable to war problems," and therefore his agency proposed to issue no war ballyhoo. "We deal in one plain commodity," Davis said, "—the facts the people of this country need to win the war."

When he made this statement, it seems impossible that Davis could have read some of the mimeographed booklets issued by his own Bureau of Campaigns. After all, it is only one of several bureaus, and its booklets are issued for a specialized audience of merchants and advertising men. But there is no doubt about its use of slick salesmanship or the fact that, by implication, it describes the men and women of the United States as stupid and reluctant customers. Here is a typical passage from the booklet, "Raise, Share Food":

Suggestion No. 2:
—that, in copy—quick-quick-quick—we remind people of the pleasure and deliciousness and health benefits of having all the dewy-fresh vegetables they want.
This positive approach, which quickly answers the instinctive human question "What is there in it for me?" seems to be the *surest* way to get people to take action.

The same theme appears in almost all their booklets. Here is a passage from "Conserve," scheduled for retail promotion in the last half of April:

So—
this month we suggest that in your ads and displays you shift emphasis from the "how" of conservation to the "why" of conservation.
And we don't mean the general, national, patriotic "why"—we mean
the *personal, private* "why"—
the answers to that automatic human question
"What's in it for me?"

And "What's in it for me?" the merchant might ask in his turn when promoting these campaigns. But the OWI has the answer:

You know, too, better than anybody else, how useful merchandise can be to dramatize such campaigns as the Victory Garden drive.
Garden clothes, for instance, can be so businesslike and attractive that all by themselves they are almost enough to make a woman plant a Victory Garden

—as well as helping the merchant toward bigger sales. Even the "Walk—and Carry" drive can mean bigger profits, and the Bureau of Campaigns gives a helpful list of walking clothes that may be highlighted:

Correctly made walking shoes. Stockings that will take the punishment of long-distance walking. Short girdles that do not bind the thighs. Weather-resistant coats, raincoats, new rainproof overshoes. Big umbrellas. Walking snoods. House sandals to change to. . . .

Indeed, an enterprising merchant could supply more rubber to women in the form of short girdles, raincoats and new rainproof overshoes than they saved by walking to the store. No customer must ever be discouraged from buying, even in the midst of a food shortage. A suggested headline for grocers is: "Try These Delicious, Health-Building Foods." Subhead idea: "Buy *all* you need. There is—and will be—plenty more where they came from." Perhaps this slogan issued by the Bureau of Campaigns is the real explanation why the report prepared by the Writers' Division, stating the unadorned facts of our food supply, was never released for distribution.

The text of that report was ready on January 3. People who saw it insist that, if published at the time, it would have gone far toward preventing the confusion about food that prevailed for the next three months. It used tough language, but that was exactly what the situation called for. By customary procedure, the report was submitted to Secretary of Agriculture Wickard. He objected to some of the gloomy statistics that had been supplied by his own department, and instead requested the use of brighter figures based on the assumption that his ideal crop goals for 1943 would be realized. The Office of Economic Stabilization, which also saw the report, thought it might be inopportune because of the debate over Lend-Lease that would shortly open in Congress. Both these objections could have been answered, but there were still others from unofficial sources. One of the writers said in his unpublished letter of resignation:

I am reliably informed that high officials of the Domestic Branch showed the original report to representatives of the food industry and of the Advertising Council (in this case to a man whose firm holds one of the largest food accounts). This disclosure of the contents of a confidential government report to men who would be financially affected by an information policy based on that report is shocking.

A more innocuous report on the food supply, prepared by another division of the OWI, was issued in April, after the resignations. By that time its carefully checked figures had ceased to correspond with the real situation, which was growing worse. A few days later Davis explained in a formal statement to the press that the OWI was not charged with maintaining the national morale: "It is our conviction that

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once the people understand the facts about the war, and the reasons for measures taken in the prosecution of the war, national morale will be taken care of by the people themselves." But the Bureau of Campaigns does not share this conviction; it wants to build morale by concealing the facts if they are unpleasant. On this point, the "Share Food" booklet is fairly specific:

> It seems best to repeat and repeat, "You will get all you need for life, health, vigor and morale." Only thus do we keep morale high, confidence active and retain our ability to lead and win.
> Morale.
> With it we win—without it we lose. Morale is the spirit—the "will-to-do." . . . Morale appears to be based on both physical and mental fitness. . . . We must do what we can to see that people get nourishing food for the body and for their minds.

In general these booklets issued by the Bureau of Campaigns of the OWI describe a promotional technique that can be used to sell anything, good, bad, or indifferent—victory gardens, war bonds, dictatorship, polygamy ("All the *best* people have *two* wives"), the old-time religion or Newbro's Herpicide. The one thing it cannot sell is democracy, which is based on trust in the ability and good will of the people at large. On the contrary, this particular technique is based on distrust and contempt for the people.

It can be argued that selfishness and gullibility are the great common denominators; that we need to use every appeal in order to win the war; and that after all no harm is done if the sales promoters spend their time getting people to save food and plant victory gardens. If they confined themselves to that type of activity, there wouldn't have been a quarrel inside the OWI. The trouble was that they tried to control the output of all the other branches as well. It was after the suppression of the Writers' Division food report, and the threat to suppress several other projects on the ground that they would paint too gloomy a picture of the war, that fifteen members of the staff resigned. With the advertising mind in control, they couldn't see much hope of doing valuable work inside the organization.

Something of the same sort went on in the Graphics Division, after it was reorganized and placed under charge of Lieutenant Commander Price Gilbert, formerly the advertising manager for Coca-Cola. The new posters, instead of grim war scenes, made a specialty of showing smiling, happy people. In one poster, an obnoxious little girl, grinning with all her teeth, was saying: "We'll have lots to eat this winter, won't we, Mother?" An art director on the staff decided to burlesque the new tendencies. He started with one of the most effective of the older posters, showing three upraised arms, two of them grasping wrenches and one a bayoneted rifle. He made the arms more decorative, replaced the wrenches and the rifle with Coca-Cola bottles, and over them lettered the slogan, "The War That Refreshes." That's the sort of war that part of the OWI has been fighting.

But it isn't the willing fault of Elmer Davis, any more than it is the fault of the writers who sympathized with him and resigned from his staff. The trouble with the Office of War Information has not been bad policies, but simply the lack of any affirmative policy. And Elmer Davis could not supply that lack, because the real policy of any Ministry or Office of War Information is the policy of the whole nation at war. After more than sixteen months of fighting, this nation still hasn't evolved a policy.

MALCOLM COWLEY

To My Sons

Your lovers will cast backward: search among
Queer pictures, furniture
And faded books,
Trembling to come on fragments of your past.
I see the impatient young
Fingers quietly tear through all that now
Looks common, but estranged by memory
Takes richness on, luster that stays unchanged
For marveling girls. Their eager images
I seem to see, foreknowing how
They will admire, mock and love
Whatever once was yours,
To leave it, in all ignorance, at the last.

But I must move
Toward the future, toward the unfeatured waste
Thicker than any time already lived, trying to find you there.
The unimaginable landscape alters
Even as my hope, sun splintered by despair.
Not this known city: her steel terraces
Bright-walled
Above the crawling craziness of loft and slum, not poverty
Nor power can figure it;
Nor Europe's stained old face remembered, nor the maps
Of places yet to visit, far and bold as mountains on the moon.
You will come home
To rooms too foreign for your mother's ghost
—Call it remembrance, call it fantasy—
Soon or late, to find.
Streets you will walk, faces you will meet, the beds you'll sleep in,
The delight, the doom you will embrace,
Are shapes beyond my famished vision.
Forgive me now, if like a lover seeking to recover
The secret past, I look away
From this held moment to what I cannot touch,
Being beyond time's farthest sad remove.
And understand how, blind, I feel ahead,
I wait, staring into the darkness,
And my heart
Wide as a wound with love.

BABETTE DEUTSCH

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Washington Notes

Let's Look at the Record

IT IS ALMOST FOUR MONTHS since a noisy, aggressive, rebellious new Congress bounced into Washington intent on curbing bureaucracy and humbling the Executive. The preliminary stage is now over. Newly elected Senators who looked like simple Victor Moores when they arrived have since learned how to strut, and House members, who, in the nature of things, can't be so important, have at least had fun parking their congressional-tagged cars where they shouldn't. What has the interval produced?

Dividing it into three parts, it has produced a new relationship to the President; it has produced some legislation—not much; and it has produced some pretty important trends. Let me take them in that order.

When Congress arrived it was resolved to go places, and it started off immediately—in all directions. Mr. Roosevelt bent to the blast. He delivered a conciliatory annual message, a conciliatory budget. He dropped Leon Henderson, brought in lame-duck Prentiss Brown, enhanced the powers of suave Jimmie Byrnes, wired for Chester Davis. He invited freshmen congressmen to the White House, made Clare Luce look rather silly, then had in the sophomores. The results are noticeable. Congressmen were Page 1 heroes in January, but they are simple congressmen now. Congress is wiser, warier—and angrier. It has found how hard it is to corner the agile President. It bides its time. It still hates Roosevelt.

Point Two: what has Congress done?

It hasn't done much, and most of that has been reactionary. The farm bill that passed the House last week is typical. It hamstrung the FSA. At every major point it aided the upper-bracket farmers at the expense of the little farmers, tenants and laborers. It struck, too, for higher prices and against anti-inflation safeguards. But this legislation, like the anti-labor or Hobbs bill, must run the Senate gantlet. The Hobbs bill probably will be smothered. The farm bill probably will be improved.

A Washington writer is always impressed by the narrow margin of safety against disastrous bills. Living here, we seem always to be on the verge of a legislative precipice. But generally one house or the other moderates the worst features of a bill, or the President vetoes the whole thing, like the outrageously inflationary Bankhead bill. The Bankhead veto settled the hash for the even more inflationary Pace bill, which would also have juggled farm parity payments. There is a breath-taking irresponsibility about such measures. This is true of the House-passed Kilday bill, which would gum up the draft act by deferring married men; it is true of the second Bankhead bill, deferring farm workers. It is hoped that the Senate will strangle the first; the House the second.

In the same way, the House almost certainly will defeat the revived McKellar bill, against the Civil Service, if it gets that far. After this measure had been happily put to sleep in Senate committee, McKellar came back from a sickbed and senatorial courtesy proved too much for good government; it was revived and will come shortly before the Senate.

Congress managed to get in several direct cracks at the President, but mostly they were unimportant. It threw out the Ed Flynn nomination as Australian Minister, and deadlocked the court appointment of Governor Allred of Texas, though confirming Rutledge to the Supreme Court. Most serious blow to the President was the vote rescinding the executive order limiting salaries to $25,000. This was in the form of a "rider," so the President couldn't get at it. This has contributed to the accumulating resentment of labor, which may have a serious blow-off soon, particularly if the farm bloc is not curbed. Labor has been taking a beating in the past four months.

The essential leaderlessness and lack of discipline in Congress is best illustrated in what it has NOT done. The record here is disgraceful. Mr. Roosevelt asked for $16,000,000,000 of additional taxes. All the other brakes on inflation will fail if this tax brake is not applied. (Britain and Canada are now paying one-half their war costs out of taxes; the United States only one-third.) But the House has wasted three months on the Ruml-plan side issue, while the basic matter of more taxes has never been approached.

Of course the other negative action is failure to do anything about the NRPB's twin reports on social services and post-war planning. The "American Beveridge Plan" today seems as dead as a duck so far as Congress is concerned. The board itself will be lucky to stay alive.

In fairness to Congress it should be said that this miserable legislative record is due in part to a system over which it has no control. The new Congress is the child of the off-season election year that so often stalls America on a dead-center of frustration. Congress is now closely divided, 57 to 38 in the Senate, 222 to 208 in the House, with Democrats leading each but with conservatives actually in control. A majority in Congress hates the New Deal; the New Deal hates a majority in Congress. It is hard to get anywhere under such conditions.

Point Three: what are the long-range trends?

These are primarily in the field of international affairs. To be blunt: they indicate sticky going for post-war collaboration. To be sure, the lend-lease two-year-continuation act was put through with only six dissenting votes (all House Republicans). But this was merely acknowledgment that erstwhile opponents had been egregiously wrong. Congressmen—liberals and conservatives alike—are in favor of winning the war. The problem is, which group shall be injured in the process, and what will happen afterward? As to the latter, the Associated Press poll of the Senate, on an advance pledge for an international police force, is a straw in the wind. Of those who voted, thirty-two voted "no"; only twenty-four "yes." Democrats voted 55 percent "yes," Republicans 24 percent "yes." Many Washington observers fear that no reasonable post-war scheme of international collaboration can get the necessary two-thirds vote in the Senate as now constituted.

Finally, there is the reciprocal-trade-agreement-extension fight. My prediction is that this vital measure, now in course of hearing in the House Ways and Means Committee, will pass the House, that it will run into particularly hard going in the Senate Finance Committee, where the high-tariff membership is loaded for bear, and that its

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Southern State Normal School Library
Springfield, S. Dak.

real struggle will not be to pass, but to pass without crippling amendments that will make it meaningless. Hearings in the House committee already show one thing: the tariff issue is as burning as ever. There is no use blinding ourselves to its possibility of disruption in the post-war world.

So there you have the present picture of a conservative Congress. To accuse it of lack of patriotism would be silly; it is doing the best it knows how. It is ready to push the war, and spend the money for it. A series of big appropriation bills has passed; two have become law. It is willing to coöperate with our allies, and is doing so. It will support the boys at the front—according to its lights. But it has no real unity with the Commander-in-Chief; it dislikes and hates the New Deal; it smells an approaching election; it can't resist the temptation to play prejudices, and one great economic interest is pitted against another.

There are ominous signs that when the emergency is over it will revolt, once and for all, from executive control, and regard the rest of the world with cool, suspicious eyes.

Washington T. R. B.

The Nazis Again

FRITZ LANG's "Hangmen Also Die," which is as badly named as most movies, is a grim, awkward film having to do with the murder of Reinhard Heydrich, the Reichsprotector of Czecho-Slovakia, and the failure of the Nazis either to capture the murderer or to break the spirit of the Czech people. The movie fails to do for Czecho-Slovakia what other occupation films have failed to do for Holland, France or Norway (twice), and that is, capture the spirit of the Czechs. Like all the others, it didn't even try. It is a Hitchcock man-trying-to-get-away-from-the-police plot, but unlike Hitchcock, it has no suavity, suspense or fluidity. Most of its success comes from the complete hate with which it goes after its Nazis, drawing each portrait in thick black line. Heydrich the Hangman flounces around with his wooden hatchet face lipsticked clumsily enough to make sure you get the idea, the other Nazis squeeze pimples, crack their knuckles and slobber over fat sausages or fat prostitutes.

The style used here is the healthy one of the silent movie days, when you had to prove visually the evilness of the villain. So the savagery is more grueling than in other propaganda films: victims are smothered under coal piles, killed in groups, kicked to death. By far its most successful scene is the one in which the heroine is set upon by a mob of Czechs, who have been told she is an informer. Here, if nowhere else, the fierce, unalterable nature of mass resistance to the Nazis is allowed to develop within the scene, and the emotion of the crowd played against the terror of the girl works up to something real.

The plot's windings are endless and sometimes fantastic. Much of the playing is beginner's stuff. The lighting is awful. The dialogue contains such clumsy "German" as "Stay right where you are or you get a slug in the guts," and such weird "Czech" as "Don't let yourself get snowed under at Valley Forge." Nowhere are human beings examined deeply enough to find the ideologies this movie is presumably about. The whole thing is as stagey as its murder of the Quisling, who manages to fall near enough to a cathedral to try to drag himself up the steps and inside while the organ plays. Also, it does seem as if not every scene need be made a device of propaganda, or if it has to be, the dialogue should be at least pronounceable and the players rehearsed in how not to sound like radio announcers.

Near the end a subplot gets going, which draws all of Prague into a plan to convict a rich Quisling beermaker—Gene Lockhart—for the Heydrich affair. The way they all gang up on Mr. Lockhart, who sobs convulsively as usual, is both funny and ingenious, and the thing in general unwinds with more vitality than the main bout. This, with the Nazi portraits and that scene between the girl and the crowd, get it in for my vote as good, in spite of all the ineptitude—but it's close.

Another occupation film out now is Warner Brothers' "Edge of Darkness," in which everything is twice as bad.

MANNY FARBER

The Bandwagon

Captain Rickenbacker said that the legislation . . . should include: "The outlawing of strikes of any nature for the duration. . . . When men are told when they shall work and where they shall strike . . . then freedom of opportunity has been destroyed. . . ." – *Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker in an address to the Ohio State Legion, as reported in The New York Times.*

Indicating their displeasure at federal government interference in state affairs, chief executives attending the Western States Governors' Conference here today adopted a resolution opposing a presidential proclamation creating a national monument at Jackson Hole, Wyoming. – *UP dispatch from Salt Lake City.*

. . . [Colonel McCormick] said he would like to see Australia and New Zealand become one state, and Canada, Scotland and Wales each to become states.

"Colonel, when you say states, just what do you mean—that they become part of the United States?"

"Yes," he said. "Just like North Dakota. We have 48 states now. Well, we'll have a few more." – *An interview with Col. Robert R. McCormick, publisher of The Chicago Tribune, in PM.*

That All-Out Effort

Members of the armed forces would receive a bonus of three years' pay if the Axis surrenders on or before April 16, 1944, under a bill introduced yesterday by Representative Morris, Democrat, of Louisiana. – *AP dispatch to The Washington Star.*

Total-War Department

"Women are doing all sorts of strenuous work in these times," said Miss Johnson. "War work and the services have taken many of the best steeplechase riders and I don't see why girls cannot take their places, at least for the duration." – *An AP dispatch from Baltimore.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping. – THE EDITORS

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Correspondence

The Catholic Issue

SIR: George P. West's article on "The Catholic Issue" [March 1] is unfortunate. This is no time to stir up suspicion and hostility, especially as the Catholic Church is in this present crisis uncompromisingly opposed to Nazism. The Pope has utterly repudiated Hitler and all his works. Catholic prelates in Germany and the occupied countries have vied with Protestants in heroic denunciation of Nazi iniquities, and priests have openly joined hands with pastors in resisting the regime. In this country the Catholics are as loyal as any group of citizens anywhere. If the Church has its share of fascist fanatics, so have the Protestants. To which communion belong the seditionists thus far imprisoned or indicted?

What to do? asks Mr. West. I answer:

Respect the Roman Catholic Church for the best that's in it, and trust that best to handle and control the worst.

Grant the Roman Catholic Church the same freedom to advocate its ideas and support its causes that is freely granted to all other groups, sacred and secular alike. . . .

The Roman Catholic Church, Mr. West suggests, is a great influence and may become a great danger. The same sweeping assertion may apply to Protestant churches, the trade unions, the big industrial interests of the nation, banks or any other social group. Are we suddenly going to preach hatred in this country against groups we don't like, and attempt to hobble, hamper, restrict or suppress them because they are active and powerful? If the Catholic Church is organizing and working effectively against progress, enlightenment and liberty, then let the rest of us organize and work effectively on behalf of these high interests. But let us not whimper and whine, least of all preach suspicion and ill will, just because the Catholic Church is awake while we are asleep, and pushing zealously its faith while we have little or no faith at all.

New York City JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

A Threat to the Rio Grande Pueblos

SIR: Bill H. R. 323, now before Congress, is entitled innocently. "To authorize the exploration of proposed dam sites located on Indian lands within the State of New Mexico," and sounds like an innocuous and routine measure. Actually, it means at best a time of agonizing anxiety for the Pueblo Indians—one of our most loyal minority groups, whose sons are fighting in the present war in numbers well above the average for the country. At worst, it threatens the very existence of some of the oldest and finest pueblos of the Rio Grande. The "proposed dam sites" are near Otowi and San Felipe. An Otowi dam would flood completely San Ildefonso Pueblo with its agricultural land, also the Santa Clara farm land, and possibly that Pueblo itself. The San Felipe site would flood the land of the Pueblo of the same name, that of San Domingo with its best land, and probably Cochiti.

These pueblos, the oldest inhabited villages in the United States, are part of our national heritage. They are familiar to thousands who have taken the famous Indian Detour; and San Domingo, as the site of the great summer Corn Dance, has attracted visitors from all over the world. All the pueblos which are threatened are among the most outstanding, are invaluable to archeologists and a continuing source of inspiration to painters, writers and architects.

It is generally recognized that some sort of flood and silt control for the Rio Grande is needed. But authoritative speakers at an official hearing on the proposed dams, at Albuquerque, testified that such control would be much more effective if exercised at the headwaters of the Rio Grande tributaries. The main reason for the choice of these particular sites for dams was brought out at the hearing. It seems that a region of the state, including the city of Albuquerque, New Mexico's largest city and business center, and constituting the Rio Grande Conservancy District, had got itself deeply into debt for a state irrigation project, which had proved so expensive that few of the water-users could pay the necessary assessments. (By one of life's little ironies, the Indians of the pueblos in the district, hard-working, self-supporting communities, with more than four centuries behind them of experience in irrigation-farming on these lands, are almost the only ones who have paid their assessments regularly.) Dams on the sites proposed would mean that the federal government would absorb the bankrupt state project and recompense the district members for work already performed. It is generally known that powerful financial interests would also benefit, directly or indirectly, from these dams.

For the Indians, the lands are not only their livelihood but their life—the pueblos are their world. There their ancestors are buried, there are their sacred springs, their holy fires which have been kept continually burning since prehistoric times, their ancient shrines for prayer. "If they flood our village," writes the Governor of San Domingo, "they must drown us with it."

If H. R. 323, authorizing exploration, is passed, and the engineers' reports are unfavorable, nothing is gained and perhaps much lost. Aside from involving government and taxpayers in unnecessary expense, the work may mean desecration and even irreparable material damage to some of the Indians' sacred places. If the reports are favorable, it marks the beginning of the destruction of one of the richest and most truly unique sources of our native American culture.

Santa Fe, N. M. ELIZABETH KNOWLTON

From The New Republic Mail Bag

From Armen Carapetyan of Sudbury, Massachusetts, comes commendation for A. G. Mezerik's article, "Why Workers Stay Home," in the April 5 issue. Many Americans who are quick to accept any anti-labor story they hear, he says, have no idea of conditions under which great numbers of American laborers work, of the occupational diseases to which they are prone, and of the danger of accidents which they constantly face. "People should read books like Dr. Alice Hamilton's 'Exploring the Dangerous Trades,' especially at a time when there are ignorant attacks on labor; when Rickenbackers, exploiting their own opportunities, create so much ill will toward workers."

In The New Republic of April 5 appeared an advertisement of The Protestant, listing the contents of a new issue of that excellent journal, just off the press. One of the articles advertised was "Franco, 'favorite son' of Pope," and the advertisement went on to say: "Mr. Fernsworth reviews and interprets a book that contains the observations that were not fit to be printed in The New York Times." Mr. Fernsworth asks us to point out, what might not be clear to a hasty reader, that the reference to The New York Times refers exclusively to the book which he reviewed, "Appeasement's Child," by Thomas J. Hamilton, and not in any way to himself.

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Spring Book Number

Hitler's Forgotten Speeches

THE LAST DECADE has produced an enormous body of literature which attempts to explain Adolf Hitler's political and private secrets. Too rarely has it been suggested that there may not be much of a secret. Essentially, everything there is to be said about Hitler has been said by Hitler himself; but his words have rarely been heeded and even more rarely understood. This most talkative and most talked about figure of our time has once again demonstrated that there is no more effective method of concealment than the broadest publicity. "I am at all times ready," he said in 1932, in the course of a political controversy, "to publish every one of my speeches and statements of the last thirteen years." In them he has been, to an incredible degree, "all things to all men": a socialist to the socialists, a capitalist to the capitalists, an imperialist to the imperialists and, very emphatically, a pacifist to the pacifists. The founder of a doctrine must never be a doctrinaire.

But Hitler's mind is an odd mixture of audacity and timidity, and his fear of betraying himself has proved greater than his confidence in human proneness to overlook the obvious. Despite his boasting, he never republished his speeches of the last twenty-odd years, thereby depriving his contemporaries of a unique opportunity to observe the mental development of a modern Genghis Khan. As a matter of fact, these speeches, showing, as they do, a world-conqueror's mind in its daily struggle with reality, would have been more revealing than many of the irresponsible tirades of "Mein Kampf" or some of the day dreams which have been offered as bits of Hitler's conversation. They might also have helped to destroy the never dying illusion that Hitler is something like a Baconian Shakespeare: a rather poor human front for a hidden genius of almost cosmic size, formerly sometimes called Hess or Haushofer or Rosenberg, nowadays more often the "Generals" or the "Junkers" or even the "Dye Trust."

Where Hitler preferred to leave us in the dark, an English scholar has now attempted to spread the light.[1] With the help of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Professor Norman H. Baynes has collected and published in a compendious two-volume work those of Hitler's speeches to which he had access. The book is consequently unique, if only because it contains a considerable technical and scientific apparatus such as seldom occurs in the sensational literature on National Socialism. An objective approach, avoiding cheap and obvious polemics, gives these volumes their special importance. Sometimes the objectivity seems overemphasized. With the seriousness of an archeologist the editor scrutinizes the most shabby sentences dropped at random by his subject, compares different texts, taken from different newspapers, and in general examines and analyzes Hitler with the pathos of distance, as though he were the pyramid of Cheops. Certainly, a Genghis Khan deserves close attention; but the solemnity with which Professor Baynes studies the style and meaning of the most irrelevant slips of the tongue or pen in the published texts is perhaps a little more than the loquacious Adolf deserves. Sometimes one even has the impression that the documents have been studied from a philological rather than a historical point of view. For example, the struggle between Hitler and Hindenburg for the presidency of Germany in 1932 is set in September; actually it took place in March and April.

Seventeen years of Hitler reflected in speeches—what a picture, what a self-portrait it would be! Speeches of a beer-hall orator who often did not have enough money to buy a railroad ticket for a trip of a hundred miles, and speeches made by the overlord of the most powerful war machine the world had ever seen—an endless verbiage, flowing, nay, foaming, through almost a generation; surely anyone who spoke so much would give himself away in the long run, regardless of how consistently he lied.

Unfortunately the gigantic collection of Professor Baynes does not give this picture. It contains the speeches not of seventeen, but of seven years; not the speeches of the demagogue who revealed himself ingeniously, but of the chancellor who largely succeeded in disguising himself. Since Hitler preferred not to publish his speeches in book form, the only available, authentic sources for these oracles of our time are the texts which he himself approved and published in his own newspaper, the Völkischer Beobachter. Apparently, Professor Baynes had no file of the Völkischer Beobachter prior to 1933, hence most of Hitler's speeches before that date were inaccessible to him. The subtitle "April, 1922-August, 1939" is therefore misleading.

There is one exception to this vast omission. Professor Baynes found a collection of speeches Hitler had delivered between 1922 and 1924. They were gathered by the speaker himself into a little book in the fall of 1923. Among them is a speech ending in the strange yet so characteristic war cry: "Aryans and anti-Semites of all countries, unite!" The book was long out of print and was not reissued until 1933, when Hitler came to power. Baynes's version is based on the edition of 1933, which does not entirely coincide with that of 1923, but contains additions and, for good reason, certain omissions. Even the booklet of 1923 was adapted and falsified, as becomes evident from a comparison with the texts printed in the Völkischer Beobachter. One example: In the Völkischer Beobachter version, Hitler, who at that time liked to make cutting remarks on American democracy, declared in a speech of January 18, 1923: "If Wilson hadn't been a swindler, he would not have become President of the United States." In the book version of 1923, the sentence was slightly toned down for reasons of caution: "If Wilson hadn't been a swindler, he would not have become president of a democracy." In the

[1] Hitler's Speeches, by Norman H. Baynes. New York: The Oxford University Press. 2 volumes; 1,992 pages. $15.

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new edition of 1933, which appeared when Hitler was already in power, the whole quotation, for obvious reasons of foreign policy, was omitted; consequently it does not appear in Baynes's book.

In these early speeches Hitler is indeed describing and revealing himself. His intention is to reveal what he calls the "Jewish dream of world domination." In one of the speeches he invents a couple of Jewish brothers whom he calls Isaak and Moses Kohn. Moses is an executive in a big industrial firm who is busy stiffening the necks of his Christian fellow executives against the demands of their workers for higher wages; simultaneously, Isaak Kohn, a socialist agitator, harangues the workers in the courtyard of the factory, stirring them up against their "slave-holders." Divide and rule; look at the way the Jew, playing his part in different masks but always with the same purpose, breaks down modern society! This was the lesson the beer-hall orator wanted to drive home. But the world demagogue, shrieking against plutocracy today, thundering against bolshevism tomorrow, could not describe his own mind and methods more aptly.

These fragments of an involuntary confession are only a small part of Professor Baynes's publication. After them comes the big gap from 1924 to 1930. For the period between 1930 and 1933 there are some scattered utterances, mostly noncommittal interviews in English newspapers.

The most extensive and complete part of the work deals with the official foreign policy of the Third Reich, the speeches by which the monster rather successfully tried to hide its claws and to look like an angel. After Hitler came to power on January 30, 1933, there had been bloody weeks inside Germany, there had been the first persecutions of political opponents and of Jews, there had been sword-rattling speeches by the lesser lights of Nazism; von Papen, who claimed to be a Christian, had declared that to the German male the battlefield was as sacred as childbirth to the female. But then, quite unexpectedly, Hitler assailed the world with his peace talks—a pleasant surprise to most foreign capitals. It would not have been so much of a surprise if Hitler's methods of propaganda had been better known, nor would it have been so reassuring. The monster had talked peace before, but it also had explained why it did so. Well aware that he had to be a militarist to militarists but a pacifist to pacifists, Hitler had in the past changed the key of his speeches as often as he changed the audience. Early in 1930, addressing what he called the "historic minority"—*i. e.*, the minority "that makes history," the war-minded "elite"—he delivered the following comment on the London Conference for Naval Disarmament:

> We Germans have no ground to harbor even the slightest desire that a so-called world peace should be preserved by methods of this sort. . . . Germany can only have the one ardent desire, that an evil spirit will rule over every conference, that discord will arise from it and that finally, in blood and fire, there will be an end of a world peace which would otherwise be the end of our people! (Völkischer Beobachter, January 29, 1930).

Nine months later his audience was not restricted to the "historic minority." He had won his first big successes in the German elections and everybody in Germany and many people abroad were listening to what he had to say. What he said, in an open letter to the French politician Gustave Hervé, was:

> The German people sincerely wants to live in peace and friendship with every civilized nation and every civilized power. . . . The new Germany which I am leading and which finds its expression in the National Socialist movement desires nothing but an understanding with the other nations of Europe (Völkischer Beobachter, October 26, 1930).

Neither quotation is to be found in Baynes—one more consequence of the regrettable disregard of Hitler's publicly expressed aims and methods which was prevalent in former years. Hitler himself boasted that the idea behind the first quotation expressed his true aim, and that the other merely indicated the method of achieving it. In October, 1932, he wrote an open letter to von Papen, who at that time was Reich Chancellor, explaining why Germany should never come out publicly for rearmament, but always—insincerely—for disarmament: "The sole concern of German diplomacy must be to show that the blame for the failure of disarmament lies exclusively with France. . . . This will lead inevitably to the isolation of France." In other words, according to Hitler the aim of peace negotiations is to fail. It was Leon Trotsky who dug up this letter a year later, when France and England were negotiating with Chancellor Hitler about disarmament. The revelation—like many others—received virtually no attention; even now in Baynes's book this informative document appears only in the appendix, in small print. The London Times, neither disturbed by Hitler's past record nor by evident facts, on December 15, 1933, called on its readers to believe in Hitler's peace proposals, for he was "a leader who is known to be a man of his word."

During seven years Hitler never stopped talking peace, as Professor Baynes's second volume well shows. These seven years of pacifist utterances seem to confirm Hitler's own theory that constant repetition is the soul of propaganda. But if Professor Baynes had presented the speeches of the preceding six or eight years too, he would have given us a better insight into the problem. Then it would have become clear that successful propaganda is not continuous repetition but continuous change, unceasing adaption to ever shifting conditions. Had we but seen that, we might also have understood that propaganda is by no means the art of shrewdly guiding stupid masses, as the author of "Mein Kampf" has described it in such an impressive way.

The very career of Adolf Hitler shows that not only propaganda but politics as a whole is much more a matter of taking orders from masses and from circumstances than giving them. It is very doubtful whether Hitler is right when he says that a lie by constant repetition acquires the force of truth. No. The reason for the success of Hitler's peace talks throughout seven years is to be found in the object rather than in the subject of these speeches, more in the illusions of those spoken to than in the delusions of the speaker. Not the ability of Hitler to do certain things but the readiness of the other side to accept them explains these seven years—and the time after.

KONRAD HEIDEN

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World Not Without End

The World of Yesterday, by Stefan Zweig. New York: The Viking Press. 455 pages. $3.

IN QUIET PERIODS the fortunate among mankind are "spirits sliding through tranquility." If the age in which they live is gradually becoming another age, they are not, in any edged personal sense, aware of it. But ours is a violent time, and the changes have been so cataclysmic that "The World of Yesterday" of which Stefan Zweig writes seems almost as vanished as the empire of the Assyrians. The very success with which this book evokes both the beauty of the past and the fatality of its passing is what gives it its tragic effectiveness. It is not so much the memoir of a life as it is the memento of an age, and the author seems, in his own phrase, to be the narrator at an illustrated lecture. The illustrations are provided by time, but his choice is brilliant, and the narration is evocative:

> Each of us, even the smallest and most insignificant, has been shaken to the depths of his being by the almost unceasing volcanic eruptions of our European earth. I know of no preëminence that I can claim, in the midst of the multitude, except this, that as an Austrian, a Jew, an author, a humanist and a pacifist, I have always stood at the exact point where those earthquakes were the most violent. Three times they have overthrown my house and my existence, severed me from the past and all that was, and hurled me with dramatic force into the void. But I do not regret this. The homeless man becomes free in a new sense. . . . And so I hope at least to fulfill one of the chief conditions of any fair portrayal of an era, namely honesty and impartiality.

This autobiography, then, resembles, however different its sources or its author, "The Education of Henry Adams." It is remarkably impersonal, for all the memories with which it is filled. It is the picture of a vanished world and a changing age seen through the eyes and expressed (in a subtly excellent translation) in the gifted speech of a man of letters and, in the best sense, a man of the world.

It is the story of a humanist, brought up among the favored few of a humane world, who lived on, until his death by his own hand a year ago, into the inhumane era which is now the lot of all men everywhere. Without wishing to make a vulgar guess about another man's motives, one cannot help feeling, after reading this sensitive—and manly—book, that it was not hysteric personal despair but a quiet resolution that prompted him to leave this world altogether. Brazil, where he died, is (and he found it so) very beautiful and full of hope. Zweig was an exile, not only from Austria, but from a European culture which was gone forever. At sixty it seemed too much to start fresh in a world in which human values were threatened by barbarisms within as well as by barbarians without. Stefan Zweig, like Virginia Woolf, is, in not too forced a sense, a war casualty.

His book remains as a wonderful testimony of a gifted witness of the European past at one of its fortunate caesuras of felicity, the world of Viennese culture and wealth and security of half a century ago. Anyone who has ever known old Vienna, or even caught in its music or its writers echoes of its qualities, will find here evoked some of the elements that went into its secret alembic. Here is, to the life, that central European Paris of the days before Hitler, before the first war, before inflation. The reader is given the sense of a capital, the assured center of an unquestioned empire, a city, cosmopolitan but uniquely itself, to whose more fortunate burghers the world of art and imagination was as much a part of their daily environment as politics or food are elsewhere. If among the older citizens this culture became routine and official, among the young it was an excitement and an Elysium. Nothing in the whole book is more touching and miraculous and yet credible than the picture given of what the new movements in poetry, painting and music meant to those boys with a genius for admiration who were Zweig's fellows at the Gymnasium. There have been other places than Vienna of half a century ago where the young responded to books, to music, to art, to ideas. But there can have been few cities in the world where serious opera and theatre, poets of genius by no means as yet celebrated, in half a dozen different languages, were the heroes and gods of adolescence. When Hugo von Hofmannsthal burst upon the German-speaking world, an unmistakable, an impossible, lyric genius in his teens, he became to these beardless boys what a cricket player might be to their contemporaries in England or a high-school football player here.

Zweig does not paint by any means a purely rapturous picture of the world in which he grew up. He is bitter to an unusual degree, for one so urbane, about the official, deadly schools, and about the hateful pruderies and suppressions of bourgeois society of his day. But the fundamental impression he leaves is that of a community where, at least among the economically favored, there was a civilized life, Viennese in accent but genuinely international in scope and character, and vivid enough to prompt Zweig and others to believe, just before the First World War, in a Europe united by the brotherhood of feeling and imagination.

It is to this European comradeship through letters and art, and a spiritual hope for mankind, that many of these pages are addressed. They evoke warmly and with melancholy retrospect the genuine comradeship of Verhaeren in Belgium, Valéry and Gide and Romain Rolland in France, Walter Rathenau in Germany, Croce in Italy—all Zweig's equal fellow minds in these memoirs. No wonder Zweig could work so wholeheartedly in the belief in a united Europe, and be so depressed by the final collapse of that dream which persisted in him and Rolland, for example, right through the last war. And they were not alone.

The humanist brought up in pre-war Vienna lived into post-war Europe and post-war Austria, to which he returned. He describes with calm skill the fevered atmosphere of the inflation period in which financial values were not the only ones that collapsed. He lived to see an almost hectic renaissance of art and literature in that time, and the rise of his reputation as a writer. He lived to see that reputation erased from Germany and Austria by the Hitler who was to erase so many of the aspects of the spiritual as well as the physical landscape; he was to become an exile in England and to see from there (one feels that it was not merely hindsight) the slow stain of Hitlerism spreading over the world. He was to see Hitler destroy the very character of the Vienna which had been so much a focus of the world's culture. He was to behold another war, more engulfing and terrifying, come to the world. He was an Austrian, and Austria was gone; he was a Jew, and

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the Jews all over Europe were being murdered by the thousands, as they are still; he was an artist, and art was being brushed aside by arms. He was a humanist, and violence was possessing the earth.

All this is recorded with remarkable psychological exactitude and impartial reflection. In 1912 Zweig had hoped, with his young confrères, for a brotherhood of international understanding through art and letters. Perhaps it required a kind of steel he lacked to look beyond the darkness to the renewal of such a hope. But there are other metals than steel, and the luster of gold, golden things created, golden things remembered, is in these pages. And if the shadow there is the shadow of defeat, shadows, too, as the author says on his last page, are born of light. It is for the living, not exhausted by exile, to see that the light is not again a mirage only. We are reminded, too, that not by spiritual manifesto or even by persuasive art is the world united; men of letters are as apt to contemn the machinery of government and economics as the experts are likely to neglect those rich ends of civilized life of which this book is so grave and enchanting a record. IRWIN EDMAN

Persons and Place

Tucker's People, by Ira Wolfert. New York: L. B. Fischer. 496 pages. $3.

SINCE ITS APOTHEOSIS in the last half of the nineteenth century, the naturalistic novel has run or has been driven into a blind alley. The commonplace course of the naturalist, particularly after the example of Zola, has been to search out a problem, a milieu or a profession and to "do" it, to "expose" it, in short to exploit it. Thus the interminable series of divorce novels, immigrant novels, farm novels, small-town novels, certain of which, to be sure—"Madame Bovary," "Germinal," "Buddenbrooks"—have justified the pattern. But in general it has fallen to the level of an Octave Mirbeau or the later novels of Sinclair Lewis.

It is no wonder then that many young writers of taste and sensitivity have reacted against the dead end of naturalism and in the direction of fantasy, symbolism and the *conte philosophique*. But the failures of naturalism in the past and its present *malaise* should not blind us to its achievements and its possibilities. For in its triumphs it has gone beyond research and reporting, so that Emma Bovary is a unique individual as well as a magnificent study of the self-destroying romantic ego in conflict with the destructive elements of provincial bourgeois life. The great naturalistic novelists of the last century never abandoned the individual or the particular in their efforts to endow society itself with the role of the protagonist. Thus despite the failures of naturalism and the alluring alternatives which present themselves to the young novelist, he will, in searching out a usable past, turn once more to the realism and naturalism of Stendhal and Balzac, of Dickens and Tolstoy.

Into a thin season for American fiction has come Ira Wolfert's "Tucker's People." It is about the Harlem numbers racket in the same sense that "Germinal" is about mining in the Borinage. On the level of reportorial observation it is superb; at times, indeed, the effort to reproduce exactly the speech of certain characters is tediously meticulous and one wishes that Wolfert had reached some such formal compromise as Hemingway or the early Sinclair Lewis arrived at. In its observation and style it possesses all the authority and skill of such writers as James T. Farrell and Jerome Weidman. While its characters are of the underworld and its environs, they are never endowed, even obliquely, with the trappings of the bizarre or the philosophy of a negative heroism. Tucker himself, entrepreneur of extra-legal business enterprises, is skillfully portrayed as at once a killer and a commonplace bourgeois. Without abandoning the imperatives of realism, among which is an uncompromising materialism, Wolfert has transcended its frequent limitations, not through a flight into symbolism or idealism or through the proclamation of a faith unwarranted by the facts of American life, but by the exploration of the complexity and ambivalence of the individual consciousness and the social process.

The whole work is a series of love stories in a sense that the popular purveyors of the product, from Saroyan to Temple Bailey, could never understand: Tucker's love for his wife; the love of two brothers, one of whom would have preferred to have lived within the law but couldn't; the love of Tucker's suave young lawyer for money and for a pathetic, gauche chorus girl; and perhaps best of all the twisted love of Bauer, whose insecurity and pride drive him to estrangement and death. The characters have a depth and many-sidedness that are rare in recent naturalistic fiction: there are moments indeed when one wonders whether such characters possess the subtlety and complexity with which they are endowed. And in filling out his portraits Wolfert relies too often on flashbacks, which even when excellent in themselves are frequently redundant or retard the story.

The social framework and the relationship of the characters to it are well handled, performing a function very much like that of the account of the whaling industry and the portraits of the personnel of the Pequod in "Moby Dick." The cross-references to legitimate business and totalitarianism are cogent and rarely dragged in by the heels. "Tucker's People" is slow getting under way, needs pruning in general, and there are overripe passages that badly misfire. But the faults, like the virtues of the book, are the result of generosity and eagerness. Like Dreiser, Wolfert can afford to write badly on occasion.

Thoreau said that most men live lives of quiet desperation. In the years since his death the lives of most men have become more desperate and less quiet. It is this quality of the modern urban world that Wolfert has powerfully captured, along with the desire for security, fellowship and love that accompanies our sense of deprivation. Ideologically he has rejected both the easy affirmation and the arid nihilism of so much recent writing; formally, despite philosophic rumblings and symbolic undertones, he has retained the approach and methods of naturalism. Without benefit of symbolism or philosophic asides, he has studied the dark democracy of good and evil and the common humanity beneath all differences of class and creed and talent. Like Malraux and Silone and the Christopher Isherwood of "Goodbye to Berlin" (if he does not always possess the maturity of their insight and craftsmanship), Wolfert has worked within the great traditions of realism and naturalism, has justified and ennobled them to produce a novel of power and promise. GEORGE MAYBERRY

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Proud Lady

Last Poems by Elinor Wylie, transcribed by Jane D. Wise. Foreword by William Rose Benét. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 105 pages. $2.75.

THERE is no single lyric in this posthumous volume that is equal to the finest pages in the "Collected Poems," but there is nothing here that does not bear the stamp of that fastidious, acute and exquisite poet who was Elinor Wylie. Those of us who remember her in her habit as she lived cannot read without pain lines that beautifully recall the arrogant lift of the head, the flash of mocking wit, the sudden revealing insight that made her so precious a companion. Those of us who practise poetry find objects for study in these further models of delicate workmanship. And those who enjoy the task of comparison and elucidation which is the concern of the critic must delight in discovering anew how much she learned from poets as various as Donne and Blake and the ballad-makers of the Scottish Border; how scrupulously, for all her admonitions against "Diminishing a brute/With pumice and with oil," she polished and refined; and how that interdependence of flesh and spirit which she never ceased to explore continued to plague and delight her. The lineaments that we know are here, unaltered, if not always so arresting in expression, and they fascinate the more because they are presented to a world whose horrors she looked upon only as in a dark, ennobled vision.

A brief Foreword by William Rose Benét, an appreciation by Edith Olivier, and a handful of rather unsatisfactory notes, as well as eight holographs which bear witness to the difficulties the manuscripts presented to those who deciphered them, add matter if little illumination to the book. This falls into four parts. Of these, the first consists of "New Poems and Sonnets" transcribed from manuscripts and here published for the first time. Then comes a delightful unfinished ballad, "The Golden Heifer," followed by another group of hitherto unpublished pieces of various periods, a few existing only in manuscript, others in typescript, the final group being made up of poems reprinted from periodicals of sorts. There is some evidence of the growth of Mrs. Wylie's powers, though the fact that the arrangement is not chronological and the doubtfulness of several dates renders judgment uncertain. What puts a signature to her slightest sally is the strength of the poet's personality. Here once more is that unique mixture of the gracious lady, the malicious gamin, the austere bluestocking and the crystalline poet.

It was always somewhat astonishing that a person of Elinor Wylie's temper should, in the happy quarrel between the adherents of Keats and those of Shelley, have been on the latter's side. Her own work, in its careful fingering, its clarity of concrete detail, its subtlety of apprehension, has seemed (the bias of the reviewer is here betrayed) allied rather to that of the "chymist/Who took the moon to wife." If one has not already found the reason for her allegiance, it is patent in the sardonic lyric entitled, "Three Elegies," the third stanza of which reminds us that "Shelley was a gentleman." Her predilection for gentlemen, however foolish, wild or shabby, her insistence on dignity as a virtue equal if not superior to courage and kindness, is everywhere apparent. It was pride that taught her to find pleasure in whatever is elegant, fragile, rare, as in those simple things that are flattering to the senses: spangles and spices, jewels and stars, serpents for their beauty, wool for its texture, honey and clear water for their purity of color and taste. It was another kind of pride, that of craftsmanship, that instructed her, as one or two holographs indicate, to choose her verbs and adjectives with such particularity. And who but she would so vauntingly and wittily rhyme "Caracalla had" with "Galahad"? It was pride that painted the clever portrait—surpassed only by her memorable self-portrait—of Stephen Benét: "Cherub in armor/Wolf in rabbit-skin," so untimely dead. Even the most passionate, even the humblest of her sonnets shows a strain of hauteur, and it was pride that governed her wisdom when she turned metaphysical. One cannot fail to recognize the dangers implicit in this virtue. But at a time when mankind must look upon its performance and into its very self with blinding shame, it is a solace, as it is a spur, to turn to works of art of which, for all their seeming slightness, the author could be justly proud.

BABETTE DEUTSCH

Clio Bemused

The Interpretation of History, by Jacques Barzun, Hajo Holborn, Herbert Heaton, Dumas Malone and George La Piana. Edited, with an Introduction by Joseph R. Strayer. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 186 pages. $2.50.

IN TIMES OF NATIONAL CRISIS history vies with religion as a support of faith. Many look to religion for personal solace and for hope about the future that cannot be justified by evidence and good sense alone. Others turn to history to seek a continuous meaning in the story of the past, "a ground to stand on," a basis for renewed belief. During the last few years shrill claims have been coming from the pulpits and lecture halls of America asserting that our democracy is lost unless it returns to God. To this has now been added the more plausible, if less fervent, claim that the study of American history is necessary in order to generate a vital democratic morale. The New York Times has started a movement to make the study of American history compulsory in all institutions of higher learning. The time was certainly ripe for it. The movement has caught on beyond anything dreamed of even by historians themselves. American history is the only required "liberal arts course" in most of the training programs of the army and navy.

It is significant that few professional historians—and none of the contributors to this volume—lend their support to this apotheosis of historical study. For although they favor increase in historical knowledge and interest, they realize how deceptive is the hope that the study of history *guarantees* support to the ideals we believe valid today. If a cause is worth fighting for, it can never be established on the grounds of history alone. Historical study is useful, and supplies us with knowledge that is often relevant to forming and correcting judgment of value. But the same can be said for many other subjects that have been cast out into the educational darkness "for the duration." For some

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values, like international good will and peace, it might be argued that a moratorium on the study of national history would be very helpful. Perhaps it is the study of the history of *other* countries that should be prescribed. It is a mistake to attribute our widespread Anglophobia primarily to British policy in India or anywhere else. The American history my generation learned in the schools developed a hostility toward Redcoats that, like most early attitudes, did not disappear when boyhood was over. Who can say to what extent Irish hatred of England is nourished by excessive emphasis on Irish history? Some visitors to Ireland report that many Irishmen talk of Cromwell as if he had pillaged the country the previous week. Mr. Barzun is justified in his remarks about the effect of excessive preoccupation with Civil War history in the South.

It is always rejoined to objections of this sort that, of course, history must be "properly" taught. But what is history "properly" taught? If it is taught as all of the contributors to this symposium would have it taught, it is not likely to appear proper to those publicists and editorial writers who want to make its study compulsory. For it would be taught critically, as a field in which objective conclusions, although difficult, would not be impossible of attainment. And among the conclusions that the critical study of history would reach there might very well be some flatly contradicting those "lessons of history" of whose truth politicians of the day are convinced independently of historical evidence. Those who love history and would like to fit it to a program usually know in advance what it will prove. Why not make the program itself the point of departure for critical study, using, wherever relevant, materials from history, economics, government and philosophy?

What is true of the teaching of history is even truer of the teaching of religion. It all depends on how it is taught. If those who urge its introduction into the curriculum of our schools were eager to see the same critical methods applied to its study that are employed in some other fields, not even skeptics and unbelievers could reasonably object. But it is not hard to imagine what an outcry would be raised if religious beliefs were taken as material for analysis instead of objects of faith. Without the scientific attitude, history becomes a kind of national religion. As a national religion not everyone can be trusted to teach it, only those can qualify who have the proper faith. I have even heard it said that a naturalist or a positivist simply cannot teach the history of Western civilization properly. For no matter how much he knows, he is "spiritually" blind.

The attempts, therefore, of professional historians, like those in this volume, to assay the value of their subject and the reliability of their methods should be welcomed. Many illuminating things are said about the various systematic approaches to history but, on the whole, the volume is richer in cautions than in wisdom. It betrays a feeling of uneasiness about the value of history, and a tendency to be apologetic not only about the qualified and partial findings of historical inquiry, but about its whole rationale. Thus, Mr. Strayer, who introduces the volume, writes: "The value of history, like the existence of free will, cannot be proved —it is simply a basic fact of human experience." This way of settling doubtful propositions by fiat is indeed convenient. But it is usually the resort of those who can give no arguments.

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If by "free will" Mr. Strayer means anything different from voluntary action—for example, an uncaused will—then far from its being a basic fact of human experience, it is a highly speculative hypothesis, and one which very few historians can employ in their researches. Fortunately, Mr. Strayer goes on to give good reasons for the value of history by noting the ways in which the "familiar" operates in the present. To be sure, there is always more than the familiar in the present, else there would be no history. Nor can anything be substituted for the vision and sensitive intelligence required to meet new historical situations. But in history as in other fields, those who have the most insights are usually those who are fortified by the widest knowledge.

Mr. Barzun, too, writes of the study of history as if he were fearful lest anybody mistake it as more scientific than it is. "The historian is no more scientific than the navigator or the doctor." Apparently in Mr. Barzun's eyes the "true" scientist is the mathematical physicist. This is a suspicious purism. It usually is a preface to the view that since we possess both reliable knowledge and good sense in fields other than mathematical physics, these fields are not subject to the common pattern of scientific inquiry but to different and "higher" modes of knowledge. Mr. Barzun does *not* take this position in his essay, but it could easily be construed from his unelaborated distinctions. It is obvious that good navigators and doctors are scientific, and that the better they are, the more scientific they are, not only about biology and oceanography but about human beings. To be scientific means to accept the control of a common pattern of inquiry, whose features are well known. The methods of mathematical physics and laboratory biology are special applications of this pattern and are not normative for all fields of inquiry. As subject matter, history differs from other disciplines not only by its vast complexity but in being a great laboratory of human values. It is more difficult to establish scientific conclusions here than elsewhere. This should make historians more tentative about their findings, not apologetic about their method. If they haven't found knowledge, they will hear soon enough from other historians. Historical wisdom is knowledge of human values and their careers under a variety of different circumstances, a knowledge, therefore, that embraces things, events, organisms and institutions in which values are rooted and find their meaning.

In some ways the least satisfactory of the essays is Mr. Holborn's, which carries the ambitious title of "The Science of History." He, too, distinguishes history as a science from other sciences, not so much in terms of its subject matter, but in terms of its method. He is convinced that history yields results every whit as valid and useful as the natural sciences. But its method differs from the other sciences. "To talk about a science of history means nothing but an affirmation of the critical and systematic approach to history." But what is a critical approach? Does it differ from a scientific approach? At the same time he assures us that "the science of history is one of the strongest forces in the defense of civilization as such." Why? Surely, not because it differs from the natural sciences in its method. And if the reason be that history is concerned with values, then ends as well as means are the concern of the scientific pattern of inquiry.

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The remaining essays are "Biography and History," by Mr. Dumas Malone, interesting but mostly small talk; "The Economic Impact of History," by Herbert Heaton, sound but marred by a heavy puckishness; and "The Theology of History," by George La Piana, a brilliant critique of religious dogma. SIDNEY HOOK

"Chiel Takin' Notes"

Thomas Wolfe's Letters to His Mother. Edited, with an Introduction by John Skally Terry. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 368 pages. $3.

SOME DAY a new American folk myth, more spontaneous than most but not less literary, may arise around Thomas Wolfe that will make him one with Paul Bunyan, Johnny Appleseed and what Henry James, thinking of the legend, called "the mold-shattering mask of Lincoln." The myth may then run as follows: a great American child, greater in his strength than even he knew, but appointed from birth, like the "dying gods" of folk myths, to redeem, to suffer and to die, was born in the mountains of western North Carolina in the first year of the tragic new century. His parents, like Lincoln's, were rude and uncomprehending, if not poor; his many brothers and sisters tried to protect or deflect him, but never knew that he had an appointed destiny; and all his teachers and critics were pagans and philistines. This folk child was titanic but lonely; he had taken the redemption of America, and particularly the purification of its youth, for his own; but no one would fully understand him until long after he had died. Then all the notes he had left on his pilgrimage would become parables, and even his most casual letters tokens of his huge sufferings. His "novels," hewn out of mountains and legends, hammered together with the fury of mountain storms, written in the long nights of his Brooklyn exile (*Brooklyn*, a word meaning wilderness), were "A Legend of Man's Hunger in His Youth," as he called himself Young Faustus and Proteus, Telemachus and Jason. But in the larger sense they were not novels at all, and only tired men over twenty and anemic book critics would judge them by the usual standards. They were testaments, sayings, apocalyptic denunciations riven from his flesh; and they had been brought into the world to point the true path and to deliver.

Here, in these bread-and-butter letters to his mother,[1] as in the multiple rhetoric of his novels, are memorabilia that may some day be alchemized into myth. But these letters can be read in another way, and the story they tell has nothing to do with folk myths, or even with *la vie de l'art*. They are the story of a young man alien from his village, his family, a young man poked at all his life and made to feel "queer," often ill and deeply unhappy; a young man who wanted desperately to write great plays (one can think of no form less suited to his gifts), failed, and became interested not so much in writing particular books as in being a Great Writer. It is a pathetic story rather than a moving one, and a painful American fragment. For what it tells is essentially the story of a young man who was the first of his tribe to seek the outlanders' education, who apologized for his ambition and nervously

[1] To be published on May 3.

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inflated it, who was bookish but had no interest in ideas, rebellious but often commonplace, and whose chief emotion was his need all his life to justify himself—and the expense of giving him an education. It takes nothing away from Wolfe's rhetorical and mimetic powers to say this; but the record is there, and Mrs. Wolfe was not Nancy Hanks:

Item: *aetat* 21. I need no clothes but will be forced to buy shoes soon. I will exercise strict economy. I am in a difficult position but I will face it in my own way. . . . I've put a heavy burden on myself; the burden of vindicating your generosity. If I fail you need never expect me home. You'll never see me again. If I succeed, and it is on that I love to think, I will be able to return and afford you, I hope, a certain measure of satisfaction and pride. Meanwhile, whatever taunts may be thrown at me, if any, of selfishness, pride, conceit, snobbishness, or what not, strike against as tough a hide as a sensitive fellow can call to his defense.

I tell you if success depends on desperate determination I will not fail. I think if the realization ever came to me that I was doomed to eternal failure, that my "bright sun" would always be just out of reach—I think I would kill myself. Don't let this alarm you. . . . I am terribly in earnest. I repeat: I am in a delicate, trying position before you and the family and I am trying to meet and solve the problem as honestly and courageously as I can. . . . Let me state this painful situation as plainly as I can. . . . I deliver myself up for judgment. . . . I wish that some divine agency could permit you to look into my heart, or into my head, as I write this. You would no longer doubt my utter sincerity, neither would you ever doubt the motives that determine me. . . . It is no longer merely a case of selfish personal ambition with me. I don't cut a very pretty figure, I suppose. . . . I'm desperately anxious for you not to misunderstand me. . . .

Item: aetat 21. . . . I assure you I have . . . practiced a rigid economy . . . I have literally spent no money except for food & room—not even for laundry—I have gone nowhere and seen no one, with . . . [*The following page is lost.*] of my life to push me a little further toward the dim goal I seek.

If my beautiful dreams were to come true I would return home like a hero having justified myself but if, please God, they do not come true, I believe you would still want. . . .

Item: aetat 24. Only remember this, Mama: . . . Live a little now, I entreat you; for we are as the men of former time —no different; and in the end we, too, shall . . . go into a place where there is darkness—nothing but darkness. . . .

. . . Pained at the implication in your letter that I am ashamed of North Carolina—only what is N. C. willing to do for me? I don't think there is a place there now for anyone who cares for anything besides Rotary and Lions and Boosters Clubs. . . . The only Progress is spiritual; the only lasting thing is Beauty—created by an artist. And N. C. has forgotten such as I. . . .

N. C. will be ready to welcome me if my plays . . . make *money, money*. You know that is quite true. Look around you in Asheville. Are the most prominent people there the finest? . . . By no means. After all, haven't you all worshiped the long bank roll too much? . . . Be honest: You know I have never been a snob.

I'm sorry about the money. . . . But don't overdo it, Mama. Life doesn't last forever. And, in fairness to yourself and everyone, don't say it's "for the children." . . . Admit that it's for your own pleasure and prosperity. Understand, Mama, if I seem to sneer at money and money getting it's not because I despise it—

Someday, before we all die, perhaps I shall get from home a letter in which all the news will be pleasant. I never have thus far. . . .

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Thus the makings and tribulations of an American genius. The full correspondence, including his letters to friends, would doubtless be on another plane, or at least have some discussion of ideas. Here the letters are chiefly about money—money and patched socks, the trouble he had getting clothes, his apologies for buying 75-cent luncheons at Harvard, picture views of Europe, and his promise—repeated and swelling with each repetition—that he *would* make good, that he would make Asheville sit up, but couldn't come home, not just yet. His social views, at least before the depression, were strictly Flaubertian (*sic*): the people were the mob. His word for a Negro who had annoyed him was the word they use in pool-parlors. Walking in New York he was worried about the "new immigration," "the dark swarthy faces of Jews, Italians, Greeks. . . . I realize more keenly than ever that I come from the old Americans. . . ." "Our constitution has perpetrated the most damnable political theory ever conceived—namely, that men are created equal. Now, I appeal to your judgment, to your good hard sense—did you ever see two people who were equal in any respect?" But in one or two letters he describes the method of his imagination. He had memorized everything carefully from his earliest youth, and would now "wreak out his soul on paper" to "express it all." "This is what my life means to me: I am at the mercy of this thing and I will do it or die. . . . This is why I think I'm going to be an artist."

That is why he was going to be an artist: because he memorized, suffered, and now wanted so terribly to be an artist. What the art would be about was a problem he never concerned himself with—the art would be about his memories and his struggles to be an artist. If people objected that Eugene Gant was only Mrs. Wolfe's son, over from the Old Kentucky Home on Spruce Street, you changed his name to George Webber. If your annual accumulations were too long, you sliced millions of words out of them and had a book. If Asheville was stung by your scornful portraits of its citizenry—well, Asheville was the Enemy, Coolidge America and the Boosters, and those who had mocked him. For the rest, the life and the work were identical, or funneled into each other; the same tribulations were on each. Art was torrential work through the long nights, where the images expanded like tropical flowers and gave the illusion of magnificence; the artist, as the editor says, was "a chiel among us takin' notes." But most of all art was the dream of greatness—not a vision of a particular achievement, not particular insight and craft and understanding of the human sacrifice, but greatness—greatness always in capital letters, in streamers of fire, greatness as greatness. What wonder is it that sometimes one wonders if Wolfe ever lived at all, so much was his private legend the abstract dream of achievement by young writers? It was as if the life had been lived only to be defended and magnified in the work, and as if the work existed not to *say* or reveal, but only to make up for the life, for all those boyhood hurts. "I don't know yet what I am capable of doing but, by God, I have genius and I shall yet force the inescapable fact down the throats of the rats and vermin who wait the proof. Well, they shall have it, and may they choke upon it." And meanwhile, an exacted letter from Telemachus to Penelope, saying: We have seen miracles; but honest, Mama, the Homeric voyage is not *too* expensive.

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Westward the Course

The Year of Decision: 1846, by Bernard DeVoto. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 538 pages. $3.50.

IN 1846 PRESIDENT POLK settled a knotty dispute with England and came away with a substantial chunk of the Oregon country. Congress, by enthusiastic majorities, leaped into war with Mexico. Zachary Taylor began the march toward victory that brought the largest territorial conquest in our history. David Wilmot, an obscure congressman from Pennsylvania, quietly read before the House a resolution barring slavery from all the land to be acquired from Mexico by the coming peace treaty. These events, if Bernard DeVoto is right, doomed the Republic to disunion and Civil War.

But the value of "The Year of Decision" does not depend upon the truth of his questionable thesis that the events of 1846 made the Civil War inevitable. DeVoto's primary purpose is to tell a story, the story of some people who went west in that eventful twelvemonth, and to tell it in such a way as to "realize the pre-Civil War, Far Western frontier as personal experience."

Written in the tradition of vivid narrative history, this volume is in many ways a prime example of its kind. Conceive of a latter-day poet of Manifest Destiny with a sense of humor and you have an idea of Mr. DeVoto's work. He has the first requisite of a good narrative historian: an imagination lusty enough to reach out for the full body of life, and yet disciplined enough to stay within range of his sources. He has done a capital job of research and he has a flair for getting a concrete image out of his documents. He has, moreover, a talent for cordial malice. Witness his account of General Taylor:

> Well, what did he have? A sound principle: attack. A less valuable one which was to serve him just as well in this war: never retreat. Total ignorance of the art of war. And an instinct, if not for command, at least for leadership. He had been hardened in years of petty frontier duty, he had no nerves and nothing recognizable as intelligence, he was afraid of nothing, and he was too unimaginative to know when he was being licked, which was fortunate since he did not know how to maneuver troops. Add to this a dislike of military forms and procedures and a taste for old clothes and you have a predestinate candidate for the presidency.

It is a tribute to Mr. DeVoto's industry and his passion for fact that the first impression one gets from this volume—which concentrates upon a single year—is one of extensiveness rather than intensity. It is also a measure of his partial failure. He has had a good deal of trouble locating the sections of his story in space and time. He has made matters no easier for the reader by a manner of telling which sacrifices the continuous theme to chronology and weaves back and forth from place to place and from character to character. Some of the tales lose their impact by being broken up and scattered throughout the book.

But the parts are better than the whole. The historian has succeeded for the most part in setting the past on its legs and getting it to walk. The images are rich and various, and they reach from Brattle Street to Pennsylvania Avenue, from Springfield to Los Angeles. James K. Polk, his mind burning fiercely "with the fire of a small backwoods parti-

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san," contrives to fulfill his dream of empire and plots to frustrate the ambitions of his Whig generals. Zachary Taylor blunders from one victory to another. Brigham Young leads his Mormons toward Deseret. Phil Kearny's Yankee boys take over a Mexican village and learn "to eat chili without tears." The Donner party leaves for the west from Springfield and wanders into a winter nightmare of starvation and cannibalism. A bunch of professional marauders and a few legitimate immigrants stage a comic-opera revolution in California by taking over the tiny hamlet of Sonoma which "could have been captured by Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn." Francis Parkman lives for seventeen days as an Oglala Sioux. The Brook Farmers gaze sadly on the burning remains of their buildings. Theodore Parker tells a Boston congregation that aggressive war is a sin. Dr. John Collins Warren performs a memorable operation with the aid of anesthesia. Henry David Thoreau plumbs Walden pond in quest of the exact spot of its greatest depth.

What emerges is a sort of historical montage. The West has always been a natural for the movies, and Mr. DeVoto seems to have carried some cinematic techniques into prose—sometimes one is reminded of the rather involved organization of D. W. Griffith's "Intolerance." Hollywood may in fact unravel some good scripts from "The Year of Decision." At its finest points it is both dramatic and pictorial.

I don't think Mr. DeVoto, an inveterate opponent of heavy generalizations, would have us take his thesis too seriously. Had he set out to prove it, he would have written an analytical history of an epoch, not the narrative history of a year. If the Civil War was in any sense inevitable, it is not particularly important to know exactly when it became so; one wants to know why, and only a small part of the answer can be found here. With one of Mr. DeVoto's conclusions, at least, no one will quarrel: by 1846 it had been decided that "the continental nation was not going to be Balkanized, it was going to remain an empire and dominate the future."

RICHARD HOFSTADTER

The Surface Depths

Men from Nowhere, by Jean Malaquais. New York: L. B. Fischer Company. 316 pages. $2.50.

SOMETIMES LANGUAGE HAS SHOULDERS AND HANDS to shrug and point beyond the limitations of the word. So it must be with "Men from Nowhere" in the richness of its original French *argot*; for even in this English translation you are aware of Malaquais as an author who gestures as he writes, replenishing his resources by drawing on the interactions of an imagined audience, while his wit plays with the substance of his story, giving it graces, making it sly, quick, extravagant and tender by turn. These gesticulations are necessary to him (and would that our unknown translator had used his hands more than the dictionary), for the story he tells depends almost entirely on the relation between narrator and narrative, implied and realized intention. He tells a sad story gayly, a desperate story lightly, a tale of extremes in a moderate voice.

"Men from Nowhere" is a book about landless, homeless, hopeless men. "During the war," says one of its characters, speaking of the First World War, "there were no man's lands. Now there are no land's men." These land-

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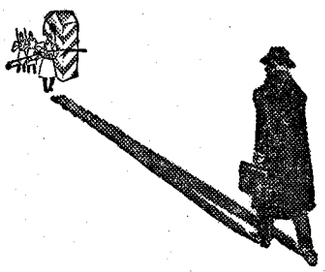
less men are gathered on the Island of Java, a narrow spit jutting into the Mediterranean from the coast of France, which owes its name to its alienation, if not its remoteness, from the mainland of Europe. The Javanese, about two hundred in number, come from all ends of the world—Karl, from Austria; Hans, from Germany; Kaimo, from Armenia; Magnus, from Russia—hence, truly from nowhere. Weekdays they work in the lead and silver mines. Sundays they get drunk.

Their story is simple and, as stories of the international Lumpen go, familiar enough. In addition to working and drinking, they fornicate, boast, steal, commiserate and dream of their lost homes. This goes on apace; the events, as events, are neither spectacular nor dull, and, if brutal, the less so in actuality for being greater in imagination. There is no crisis, no discharge of pent symbolic energies, no turning point where structure takes on morality. The story ends when the police authorities, eager to rid themselves of the foreigners, force the closing of the neighboring British-controlled mines. For a moment the miners are aroused. A revolutionary situation has been thrust at them, they will make something of it, they will stage a sitdown strike, no one is going to shove them around! After all, even if they are pushed beyond its frontiers, they still have the dignity and tradition of their revolutionary Europe to uphold. . . . But they are no longer up to it. They come a-begging, get three days' extra pay, and off they go, a good riddance.

It is not the story but the meanings surrounding it which define the actual movement of events. Malaquais' drama



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is inadequate—I should say deliberately so, as though he were indirectly characterizing the world by implying that even great excitement is no longer possible. But if the ultimate significance of Malaquais' inventions is external, it nevertheless remains near enough to the story for his irony to bridge the gap; and such underwriting is redeemed by its overtones. The perspective which the Javanese lack is available to the author, and the knowledge he has beforehand is sufficient to establish irony in the failure of the Javanese to suffer up to their measure. Otherwise, their squabbles, the recorded thefts and seductions, the hallucinations of the mad White Russian girl who sees Stalin up the chimney stack, even the love between the virginal Doctor Magnus and Miranda the prostitute would appear unintentionally trivial and underdone. But the understanding is in attendance, instructing the imagination. The miners go quietly into their mines; but the mind is aware of the allegory of submersion and emergence. The present war is about to break; but you realize, and it explains everything, that they are still suffering from the last one.

Like Céline, Malaquais posits a residual world resulting from man's failure or refusal to commit suicide. He explores exempted time, the hanging moment between the charged event and its failure to explode. Exemption is graceful. Life, in its extreme insecurity, may still discover treasures on the earth, streaks of innocence and beauty in the vein that was mined to exhaustion. Then there occurs a freeing of emotion, and even—Malaquais goes so far—a release of the reasoning capacity to evaluate discovered goods and plan their restoration.

But exemption is the supreme irony. Men are about to die; meanwhile they respire. A society is about to disintegrate; meanwhile it holds together, patched with adhesions, bolstered by inertia, so that even Java maintains itself. And meanwhile one draws a free breath and adapts himself. So much the worse for the world when its inhabitants are as adaptable as vermin. But meanwhile one is free to crawl around a bit.

Malaquais, all along, has shown his relation to this world. He may write as a man whom experience has robbed of all his faith, leaving only his wit intact—nevertheless he betrays a profound credulity. His dramatic feeling may be moderate, but his style is relentless, giving every word a point and a turn. The disproportion between the moral and the dramatic significance of his narrative is balanced by a similar disproportion between his energy as a stylist and the passivity of the world through which he moves. His energy overruns itself, but a lively surplus remains which he uses to his own account. He has dramatized passivity; therefore the creative artist remains unexhausted, and he counterposes his own resources against the world which is decaying at his feet. He has absorbed the shock of decay. Malaquais, himself, is whole, a man proud of his receptive capacity and his ability to undergo violence; and, taking pride in his violent passivity, he finds in it his stability and his poise: the delight he can take in taking it until he is inured and, one degree further, until he is melted down and begins running clear.

Hence, his will is lodged in the foreground of his experience, and Malaquais, depicting a world *in extremis*, secures himself in immediacy, one of the world's farthest extremes. His greatness is not of the artist, but of the esthete, the credulous man capable of sustaining himself

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through the deliberate exercise of sensibility. Art can lose faith, but credulity is less easily overthrown.

He has not generalized his spirit, Plato-wise, to embrace and obliterate the discrepant world. His perception remains clear, and he knows his own measure. His resolution, the strongest, perhaps, that an esthete has ever been able to muster, still cannot be extended and shared, and for all his strength, Malaquais remains an exasperated man. But his very spirit, in the effort to sustain itself, mistakes its own exasperation for the Holy Ghost. ISAAC ROSENFELD

Liberal Agonistes

A Time to Live, by Michael Blankfort. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 343 pages. $2.50.

THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT of the thirties, in which writers played so large a part, begins to find its inevitable place as a literary theme. The great virtue of Michael Blankfort's "A Time to Live" is that it attacks the central phenomenon: the hold that Marxism as a doctrine and the Communist Party as an organization had upon so many American minds. It is a serious, courageous and in part successful book.

What happened to American intellectual life in the thirties already seems mysterious, even to many of those who were party members or party fronters four years ago. Mr. Blankfort helps us to understand or to remember, as the case may be, by recreating essential situations and crucial moods. The experiences of his Ernie Cripton are representative experiences: worrying about the depression, meeting an honest-to-God Communist, seeing an unemployment demonstration, writing for a left-wing theatre, working with Communists and getting involved in their quarrels, thinking about Spain, thinking about the Moscow trials, breaking with the Communists after the Soviet-Nazi pact and feeling good and lost. Blankfort gets certain things and gets them right: the shock of seeing heads cracked by police clubs and the humility of the intellectual before the scarred and jail-worn party worker; the glow of doing something for the cause and the gratitude for a kind word from a genuine Bolshevik; the agony of Spain and the self-distrust of those who did not go to Spain to fight. He knows that the intellectuals often made fools of themselves, but he also knows that mostly their hopes were generous and sometimes their actions were brave.

All this Blankfort gives us in the form of Ernie Cripton's reflections on December 7 and 8, 1941. It is in the mood of Pearl Harbor that Cripton thinks about the past, and finally the past catches up with the present, for his friend Sully, who made a Communist of sorts of him and from whom he has been estranged since the pact, comes to see him. The arrival of Sully gives the novel a curiously ambiguous conclusion. Sully is a good enough example of the pure party-line intellectual, brave, self-sacrificing, sustained by the conviction that whatever Stalin does is right. And now he, who has never wavered, confronts the vacillating, self-distrusting, and at the moment, thanks to Pearl Harbor, exalted Cripton. Mr. Blankfort has let Cripton do a job on himself, parading in sackcloth and ashes because of the sins of the intellectuals; and that is right for Cripton and perhaps a relief for Blankfort. But the comparison, in that particular set of circumstances, gives Sully all the advantage. There he stands, so firm, so clear, so right, with the glory of the Red Army round his head like a halo, and beside him Cripton, sighing that the party is not for him, is a weakling. If this is what Mr. Blankfort intended, he is a subtle propagandist. If it is not what he intended, he has fallen into a strange error. In either case he has told only half the story.

The conclusion is troubling in another way. For the resolution of the book's conflicts Mr. Blankfort depends on the mood of the hours after Pearl Harbor. But, though many persons may have felt Cripton's exaltation on December 7, the mood could not and did not endure. We may have believed then that at last the fight against fascism was fairly joined, that at last the issues were clear. Gradually, however, we have learned the truth: that the problems it is the intellectual's job to deal with all remain. There has been, can be, no simplification. War, like revolution, can solve the intellectual's dilemmas, can give him the simplicity and certainty he craves, only in the sense that it offers him an excuse for ceasing to be an intellectual.

GRANVILLE HICKS

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